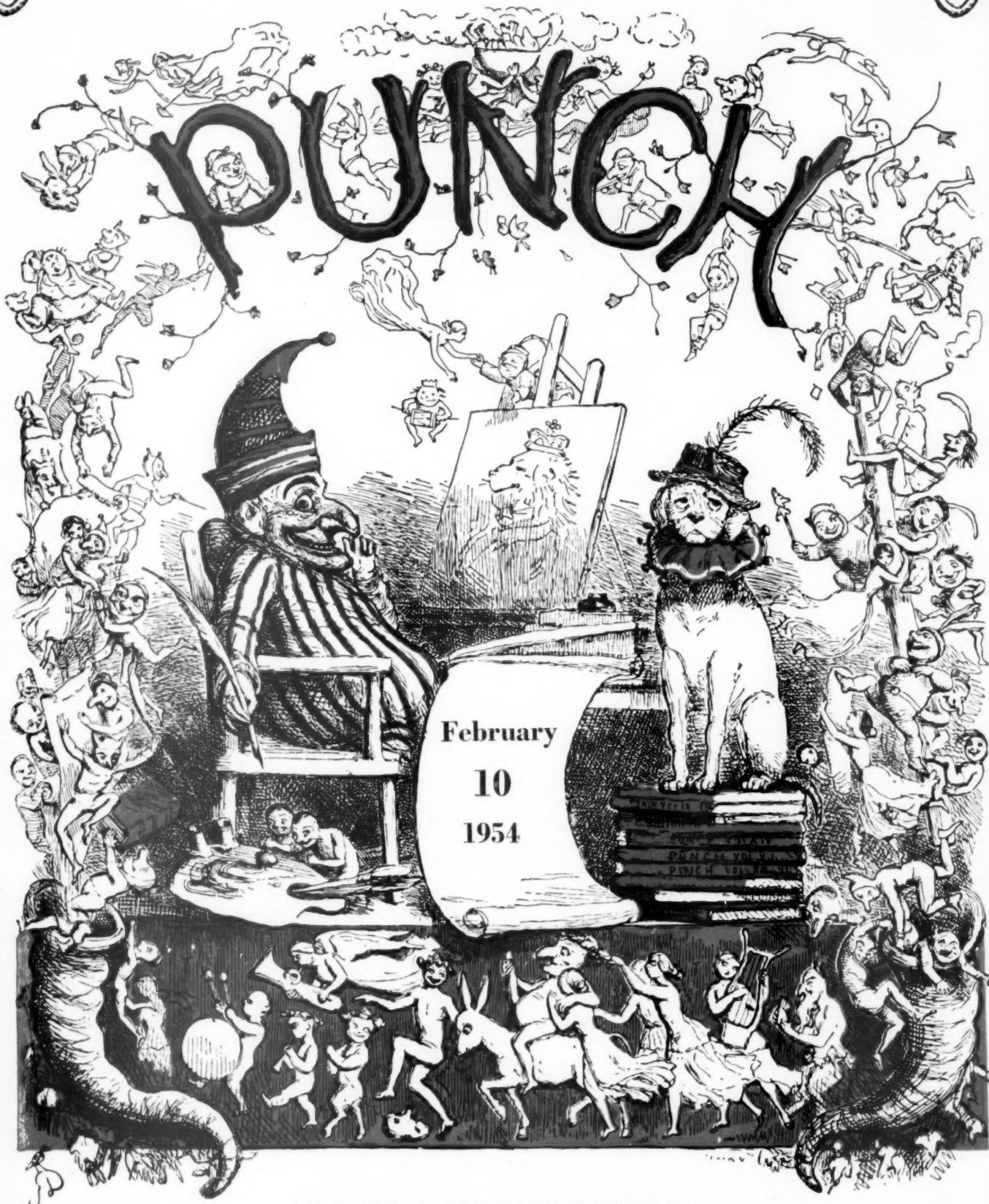


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PUNCH or The London Charivari—February 10 1954

6<sup>d</sup>

February  
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PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E. C. 4



## By Royal Command

'Take a shop,' said the Prince, and Mr. Marcovitch, who, a hundred years ago, was making his cigarettes in an obscure room near Piccadilly knew that their excellence had made him famous. Ever since, Marcovitch Cigarettes have been made to the same high standards as won the approval of that Eminent Personage and his friends; they are rolled of the very finest tobacco, for the pleasure of those whose palates appreciate perfection.



*Marcovitch*  
**BLACK AND WHITE**  
cigarettes for Virginia smokers

25 for 5/5

Also **BLACK AND WHITE**  
**'SMOKING MIXTURE**  
2 oz. tin 9/6

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## WORKERS IN THE TEAM

Number 5 in a series

KEEN BLUE EYES accustomed to long hours on the look-out; the clear complexion of one who works out of doors; unobtrusive competence and a sparkle of quiet humour. This is Vic Pitcher, a contented man.

It was in 1927 that he began to drive a lorry for the Company as his father did before him. Now he has two sons in the firm. He has covered well over three-quarters of a million miles, is still driving, and still likes it. There is responsibility in delivering big loads of equipment and materials to distant sites where everything depends on punctuality.

He is justly proud of the condi-



tion of the lorry which has been in his charge for 3½ years. On Saturday mornings he works on its maintenance; and behind him are all the resources of the great central transport and equipment depot on which he is based. The depot relies on Vic and Vic relies on the depot, which is part of a very much larger organisation, the Company; and that is made up of many thousands of people who, like Vic, take a pride in their jobs.

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**AUSTIN A30 SEVEN.** Today's version of the world's best-loved car. Speeds up to 60 with great petrol savings. Takes four and luggage easily and — like all Austins — has safety glass windows throughout. £335 plus £140. 14. 2 purchase tax.

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A cartoon illustration of a man in a light-colored raincoat and dark rubber boots, walking a dog. He is holding a cane and has a pipe in his mouth. The background is a simple sketch of a landscape.

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on Earth*

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For town days

and

country ways



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LUNEDALE



BREDON



POLDEN

One requisite for both; silkily fine leather, handled with aplomb, suavely tailored, polished and buffed, glossy as a buttercup. Used as revealingly as Clarks have used it, in these spring-welcoming Country Club shoes.

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BRECON Amberglow, mahogany or blue: 65/-  
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Nearest shop? Write CLARKS, Dept. J.2, Street, Somerset—and ask for a style leaflet.

For town days

and country ways





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**OLD BLEACH** *ready to dry*  
kitchen and glass cloths

In case of difficulty write to The Old Bleach Linen Co. Ltd, Randalstown, N. Ireland.

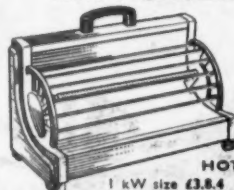


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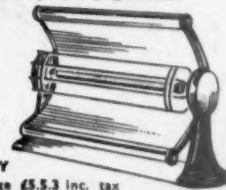
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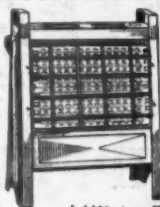
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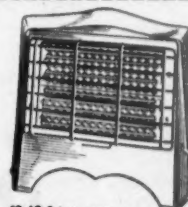
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**GINGER**  
in it!

\* Yes, Stone's Ginger Wine is made from real Jamaican ginger—made to the same formula originated in 1740.



**STONE'S**  
ORIGINAL  
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Enjoy also Stone's Orange Wine and Stone's Rich Raisin Wine. 7/6 per bottle

*Some prefer listening ...*



*... others, looking*



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*The Best Cigarettes in the World -*



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**What's the betting ...**



Ten to one you'll find that the clothes worn with such easy confidence by smart men at all first-class sporting events are Glencairn thorn-proof, woven in Ulster and as loyal as their name. Two-fold warp and weft, finely-spun, give these tweeds their exceptional resilience and enduring texture.

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Probably the  
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From the best  
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News from every man's angle

The comfort of a  
cap with the ease  
of a beret

**KANGOL**

BERETCAP

Patents pending

# Sack those draughts!



As fast as it is produced, valuable heat will leak away again from every building structure—mainly through **draughty doors and windows** and the **unprotected roof-space**. How, then, as this endless loss can never be replaced on a restricted fuel supply, can sufficient warmth and living comfort ever be obtained in wintertime?

The answer, surely, is to make **more heat available** by preventing its escape; to conserve more warmth for proper use which would otherwise be wasted. This is where heat conservation by HERMESEAL really proves its worth. It will **permanently banish draughts** and so **halve** the loss of warmth through your doors and windows; it will cut down by **three-quarters** the heavy heat-loss through your roof-space.

A third or more of all the heat—and therefore fuel—now wasted in your home or office, flat or factory, disappears through these two sources. Let us conserve it for your use and thus solve your heating problems. We are at your service now.

**draught exclusion  
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OLYMPIA

I see you drink Seagers.  
Nice bottle.

Nice gin.

What's the difference  
between Seagers and any  
other gin?

I haven't the slightest idea.

Then why drink it?

Because I like it.

That's not a very  
profound reason.

It's the best I can  
do. Try it and see  
if you can think  
of a better one.

**SEAGERS**  
SPECIAL  
LONDON  
DRY GIN  
20 PROOF

Seager, Evans & Co. Limited,  
The Distillery, London, E.C.3

## FACTS ABOUT YOUR NERVES

# What your doctor means by 'run down'



Section of nerve trunk showing nerve fibres running in bundles within sheaths. Each fibre plays an essential part in the 'telegraphing' of impulses to and from every part of the body.

When your doctor tells you you are 'run down' he will probably write the word 'Neurasthenia' on your medical card. This is a Greek word meaning nerve weakness. Now it may surprise you, when you complain of being easily tired with no energy or inclination to tackle your daily tasks, that your doctor should diagnose this as **nervous exhaustion**. But doctors, you see, know very definitely that when your symptoms cannot be traced to any definite physical cause, then the root of your trouble must be 'nerves'.

### TREATMENT OF 'BAD NERVES'

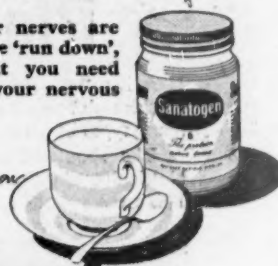
Although the physical and emotional mechanism that causes 'nerves' is still much of a mystery, we do know that healthy nerve cells must have an adequate supply of protein and phosphorus. If these two elements are lacking, then your nerve cells cannot function properly. To restore these 'starved' nerve cells and to promote their activity, you need

the extra phosphorus and protein that Sanatogen gives you.

### DOCTORS' OPINIONS

More than 25,000 doctors have endorsed the use of Sanatogen—a remarkable official recognition of its restorative power. Sanatogen is unique in form and composition and is the standard tonic for all cases of 'nerves', irritability, over-tiredness and mental and physical strain, in fact, 'run down' conditions generally.

**FOR 'NERVES'.** If your nerves are bothering you and you are 'run down', it is a clear sign that you need Sanatogen to build up your nervous system. From 6/11.



# Sanatogen

THE PROTEIN NERVE TONIC

The word 'Sanatogen' is a registered trade mark of Genatosan Ltd., Loughborough, Leics.





## Plunger to Plastic

Here is a "shooter" at work. His connection with the girl in the plastic mackintosh? He is seeking oil; and oil is one of the basic raw materials for many types of plastics.

The shooter's target lies several thousand feet below the earth in Nottinghamshire. As he presses the plunger he detonates a dynamite "shot." This creates shock waves which are reflected back to the surface from underground rock layers. Recorded and charted, these shock waves indicate where and at what depth likely oil-bearing formations may be found.

About three-quarters of a million tons of oil have so far been produced in Nottinghamshire: not much compared with Anglo-Iranian's yearly output of over 30,000,000 tons, but every ton produced at home saves valuable tanker space.



THE BP SHIELD IS THE SYMBOL OF THE WORLD-WIDE ORGANISATION OF

**Anglo-Iranian Oil Company**

whose products include BP Super and BP Energol LIMITED



# OUTSIDE PAINT



has an  
outsized job

Outside painting is quite a different proposition from inside painting. *Outside* painting has to do a protective job, and if that job is ever neglected the very soundness of the building may be endangered. It's as simple as that, and as serious. What kind of paint can protect a door, a window frame, a cement-rendered or stucco front from the ceaseless attack of British weather? What kind of paint needs fewer repaints, and less expensive repaints because it doesn't crack or flake? The answer has been proved good over centuries.

## White Lead Paint Lasts.

Magnet White Lead Base HARD GLOSS Paint is the up-to-date version of this trusty friend. Hard Gloss. Lasting Protection. A range of 32 intermixable colours. If your Decorator doesn't tell you, you tell your Decorator . . .

## MAGNET for the OUTSIDE

ASSOCIATED LEAD MANUFACTURERS LIMITED

LONDON NEWCASTLE CHESTER



## Double Diamond has a place in the home!



What a comfort to have a Double Diamond about the house! It's just what you need when you come home after a hard day. A Double Diamond *works wonders*—takes the tension out of life, puts the worries of the day to rest for the night. Come home to your Double Diamond and you'll feel more like yourself again.

## A DOUBLE DIAMOND works wonders



IND COOPE'S DOUBLE DIAMOND BREWED AT BURTON



## The man with a load of mischief

For those who can swallow statistics raw, here is a statement based on current Treasury figures and the Anglo-American Team's report on Materials Handling.

It's a biggish pill to swallow. A bitter one, too. *Man-handling—the use of human muscle to lift and move goods—is still, in 1954, accounting for 17½% of British industry's handling costs. We are pointlessly, wastefully, loading the cost of what we produce to the tune of £250 millions a year.*

Don't blame the men who manage the big, old-established industries. It is largely they who have switched to mechanical handling—and proved that the versatile battery-powered electric truck not only sensation-ally cuts the costs of handling but frees men



for truly productive work. It is the smaller concerns and the new light industries that are holding back. The bogy is Capital Outlay.

What is the answer to that? Only a better understanding of the return available on the outlay. The modern battery electric truck is the simplest, most long-lived, most cheaply maintained mechanical vehicle yet devised. A battery truck can do *all* the handling jobs—it can load and unload, lift, carry and stack to roof level. And its 'fuel' cost, in terms of electric current consumed, is from 1d. an hour.

It is just as true of a factory truck as it is of a dockside crane: it's *cheaper* to buy and use the machine than to hire and misuse muscles.

## Exide-Ironclad BATTERIES—a product of Chloride Batteries Limited

★ *The Company's Battery Traction Advisory Staff is always ready to discuss any aspect of electric traction*

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**MR. MOLOTOV's** firm discrimination between elections and free elections, though regarded with mistrust in the West, is founded on sheer common sense. It is on record that he once summed up the whole problem: "The trouble with free elections is that you can't tell what sort of a Government they are going to produce."

#### Look Out, Hollywood

**DR. KINSEY**, according to the *New York World Telegram and Sun*, is to explain to a special committee of the House of Representatives how he financed his recent reports. The trouble seems to be that his work was backed by one or more "tax-exemption foundations," bodies liable to State investigation lest their



resources should be used for un-American ends. World reaction is awaited to the committee's finding that sex is un-American.

#### From the Dutch

**IN** matters of commerce, the fault of the Tate is selling too cheaply, and buying too late.

#### Note from the North

**THE** two hours' debate in the council chamber of Wigtown, concerning the fate of a retired dustcart horse was, according to the *Scottish Daily Express*, a lively affair. The provost alleged that petition signatures had been gleaned from an

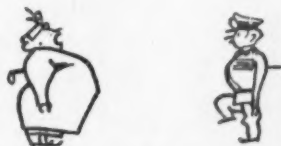
alien parish, and that the children who gathered there were dupes of the local schoolmistress. Bailie Watson and treasurer McGuffie clashed over the animal's drain on the ratepayers. One councillor was carried by his fervour into strange rhetorical byways, demanding that the police sergeant should leave the meeting, and asking why the town architect was not present. And the schoolmistress was severely censured by Councillor Bell, who thundered, according to the *Express*, "The teacher did wrong in telling the children what goes on in the council. The children are there to be educated, not to learn about the council."

#### No Lagging

**CITY-BY-CITY** strikes called by the Electrical Trades Union seem to have caused less alarm and despondency than the organizers hoped. Londoners at any rate, when their turn came, were too busy with other problems to care whether seven thousand of the capital's electricians were out or not. What did annoy the average householder was that when he tried to ring up roughly the same number of plumbers he found that they were all out too.

#### More Shortightedness

**RECENT** moves to restrain senior Army officers in their public speeches are likely to gather fresh impetus from the strictures by



General Sir Brian Horrocks on the British mother. The modern soldier, said General Horrocks, "lives under

the malignant influence of Mum, and believe me it is a dangerous influence." This, as Whitehall may already have pointed out, is no way to get mothers on the side of the War Office. In peace or war, a mother has her place, and if the General wants an Army he will find it difficult to manage without her.

#### Sincerest Form of Flattery

**THE** Misses Anne Edwards and Drusilla Beyfus, bringing an exhilarating whiff of Paris into the



columns of the *Daily Express*, reported last week:

"One fact that illumines the mood of France to-day, better than the millions of words written about it, is that the French are drinking less and less coffee and more and more tea.

"Why? They feel that coffee makes them neurotic and French—and tea keeps them calm and British."

It is hoped that the report will be accepted by all loyal Frenchmen with their usual sang-froid.

#### To Open, Tap with Spoon

**WHAT** impresses most about the newly-founded National Egg Information Service is the promise, in an early publicity release, to maintain a twenty-four-hour service. Even allowing the claim that eggs are consistently in the news, "the current story being the change in the egg stamp," it seems doubtful whether there is enough information about eggs to keep the Service's telephones going night and day. Perhaps it is with this danger in mind that the first bulletin opens

slowly, conserving its resources. "Eggs make perfect food," it discloses. "Naturally packed products, untouched by human hand, they are easily and quickly cooked, of great nutritional value, and make a cheap meal."

#### Christening

SCIENTIFIC circles are worried over the naming of a new radioactive element, No. 99, discovered at the Berkeley laboratory of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. The Berkeley team already has element No. 97 to its credit, and proudly named it Berkelium. All they can think of to call No. 99, however, is Ekaholmium, because it is related to No. 67, known as Holmium, and this has drawn protest on the score that a fresh find is

entitled to an identity of its own rather than one based on family connections. A possible solution lies in the disclosure that the new-found No. 99 is "shortlived, and in a few minutes changes into No. 97." Surely it should be possible to ignore it for a few minutes at birth, and then address it as Berkelium?

#### Trying to Connect Us

FEW Government departments come in for as much criticism as the General Post Office, and a booklet circulated to the Press should go far towards clearing up misunderstandings, particularly with regard to the telegraph services. A note on the subject says:

"In order to provide satisfactory telegraph services as economically as possible, it is essential to arrange

that the numbers of staff available at all times shall conform as closely as practicable to the estimated number required to perform the work."

In a covering letter the G.P.O. Public Relations Department expresses willingness to "answer any inquiries arising out of the booklet." Telephone, Headquarters 1234 (2169 lines).

#### O Sapientia

*In America there has been recently demonstrated an electronic machine capable of translating sentences of Russian into English.*

AND when at last mankind is able To exorcise the Curse of Babel Perhaps some electronic brain May set itself a higher goal— To make an electronic soul And grapple with the Curse of Cain.

## CONFERRING CONSIDERED AS ONE OF THE FINE ARTS

IN recent years the public have grown accustomed to watching solicitously over international conferences. Hitler, they read, was in a genial mood; he had been seen in intimate, friendly conversation with the British Ambassador; his speech was moderately phrased, and held out the hope of an acceptable compromise. Such intimations of peaceful co-existence were eagerly seized upon, only, of course, to be belied by subsequent developments. The Four-Power Conference in Berlin has, in this respect, been running true to form.

The four participants are seasoned men. Mr. Dulles attended his first conference at The Hague in 1907; Mr. Eden got his chance at the League of Nations when he was in his twenties, and soon established himself as a champion in his own lightweight class; M. Bidault's experience, it is true, only extends over the post-war years, but it has been intense, and he has developed exceptional tenacity and staying power. As for Mr. Molotov—there's a veteran if you like. He has conferred with Hitler in a Berlin bunker, with President Roosevelt in the White House, and with Sir Winston

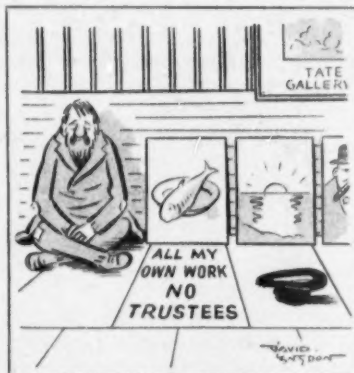
Churchill in Downing Street. The satellites scarcely count; among them he is like Napoleon with the German kings when he snapped out: "*Roi de Bavière, taisez-vous!*" Lately, however, he has conferred with Mao Tse-Tung and Chou En-lai, both, no doubt, formidable antagonists.

The art of conferring, as exemplified by these experienced practitioners, is to speak as much as possible and to say as little as possible. Assent to the principle must be combined with imprecision regarding its application. Thus, for instance, in Berlin the four Foreign Ministers have vied with one another in asserting their belief in free elections. The Soviet Government,

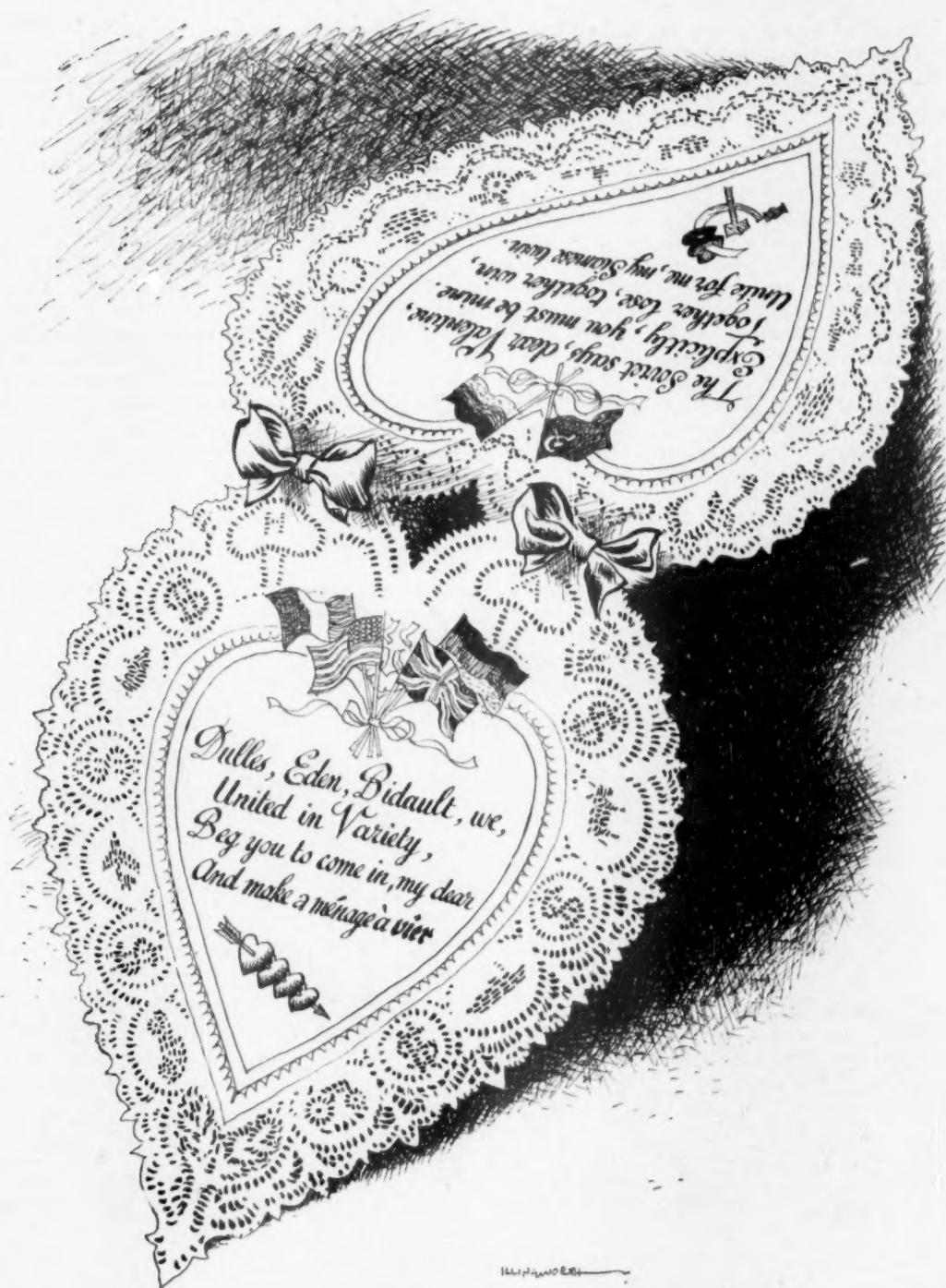
Mr. Molotov has pointed out, with a touch of righteous indignation in his voice, has surely sufficiently manifested its nice regard for them. Wherever its sway extends people flock to the poll and vote unanimously. Is a government, Mr. Eden will have asked, which has lately enfranchised naked tribesmen in the upper reaches of the Nile to be suspected of a desire to deprive Germans of a like privilege? Mr. Dulles has behind him the self-evident proposition that men were created equal and free, and M. Bidault need not blush to avow his adherence to Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

These splendid assertions, in any case, left undisturbed all the vast mountains of rubble amidst which they were made. In the little wooden watch-towers along the zonal frontier, guards with their dogs and sub-machine guns were no less vigilant in ensuring that no-one flitted from east to west. In distant camps timber continued to be cut and uranium to be mined by political prisoners in process of moral regeneration, and in distant laboratories scientists continued to seek frenziedly for yet more deadly means of destruction.

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE



## THE LOVE OF FOUR MINISTERS



After protracted discussion, the Foreign Ministers conferring in Berlin have issued an agreed statement recording the dispatch of a joint Valentine to Germany.



# Manners Makyth Man

BY P. G. WODEHOUSE

**I** THINK if I were returning to New York to-day after a lengthy absence and were asked by reporters what changes I had noticed since my last visit, I would not speak of the Triboro Bridge or Rockefeller Center or the forests of television masts which have sprouted on every roof. I would single out for special mention the extraordinary improvement there has been of late in the manners of the populace. In recent years New York has become a city of Chesterfields, its inhabitants as polite as pallbearers. It may be Emily Post's daily advice on deportment in one of the morning papers that has brought about this change for the better. Or perhaps it is because I have been over here, setting them a good example.

New Yorkers in the old days were all splendid fellows, but it cannot be denied that they were inclined to be a little on the brusque side. Taxi

drivers snarled at you. Pedestrians shoved you, and asked curtly who you were shoving. At baseball games it was customary to recommend the killing of the umpire and to start the good work off by throwing pop bottles at him. One of my earliest recollections of the city—it must have been somewhere in 1909—is of watching a mob of travellers trying to enter a subway train and getting jammed in the doorway. Two subway officials were standing on the platform, and the first subway official said to the second subway official:

"Pile 'em in, George."

Whereupon the two took a running dive at the mass and started to shove like front-row forwards. It was effective, but it would not happen to-day. George and his colleague would at least say "Pardon us, gentlemen" before putting their heads down.

You see it everywhere, this new

courtesy. A waitress in one of those small West Side restaurants was speaking highly of a certain customer, a regular of hers. "Every time I serve him anything at the table," she said, "he stops eating and raises his hat."

The proprietor of a drug store down Hell's Kitchen way, having retired to rest after a working day of sixteen hours, was woken at two in the morning by a ring at his doorbell and found a customer who wanted ten cents worth of bicarbonate for his indigestion. A few years ago this would unquestionably have led to something that would have interested the Homicide Squad, but all that happened was that the druggist, correctly hiding a yawn behind his hand, pointed out affably that all the customer really needed was a glass of hot water, which he could get at home. "Oh, thank you," said the customer, putting the dime



*"I wonder what the third thing's going to be."*

back in his pocket. "Then I won't trouble you."

The eminent social historian, Billy Rose, tells of driving in his car and stalling the engine at a street intersection. The lights changed from green to red and from red back again to green. A policeman came over.

"What's the matter, son?" he asked sympathetically. "Haven't we got any colours you like?"

It is difficult to see how he could have been nicer. One can almost hear Emily Post cheering in the background.

Boxers, too, not so long ago a somewhat uncouth section of the community who were seldom if ever mistaken for members of the Vere de Vere family, have taken on a polish which makes their society a pleasure. They have names like Cyril and Percy and Eugene and live up to them. I can remember the time when, if you asked Kid Biff (the Hoboken Assassin) what in his opinion were his chances in his impending contest with Boko Swat (the Bronx's answer to Civilization), he would reply "Dat bum? I'll moider him." To-day, if the papers report these things correctly, it would be:

"The question which you have propounded is by no means an easy one to answer. So many imponderables must be taken into consideration. It is, I mean to say, always difficult to predict before their entry into the arena the outcome of an encounter between two highly trained and skilful welterweights. I may say, however—I am, of course, open to correction—that I am confident of establishing my superiority on the twenty-fourth *prox*. My manager, who, a good deal to my regret, is addicted to the *argot*, is convinced that I shall knock the blighter's block off."

There was a boxer at the St. Nicholas Rink a few weeks ago who came up against an opponent with an unpleasantly forceful left hook which he kept applying to the spot on our hero's body where, when he was in mufti, his third waistcoat button would have been. The victim's manager watched pallidly from outside the ropes, and when the boxer came back to his corner at the

end of the round, was all concern and compassion.

"Joey," he asked anxiously, "how do you feel?"

"Fine, thank you," said the boxer. "And you?"

Even the criminal classes have caught the spirit. Three men who needed \$49,000 called on a Brooklyn millionaire the other night to collect it, and my reason for bringing this up is that the morning papers, reporting the incident, stressed their charm and courtesy. When the householder, finding them at his bedside, asked them not to make a noise because his wife was not well, they "expressed concern." After which, they "combed the house, speaking politely on occasion" and "apologetically tied Mr. Brainum's hands behind him."

Nor is this courtliness confined to burglars. From Passaic, New Jersey, comes the news that "an unidentified assailant plunged a knife into James F. Dobson's shoulder to-day, spun him around and then, seeing his face, uttered a sharp exclamation."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he said. "I got the wrong guy."

Frank and manly. It is what Emily Post has always insisted on. If you find yourself in the wrong, admit it and apologize.

Of course, even to-day you come across the occasional backslider, the fellow who lets the side down. A "slim, elderly man wearing a grey Homburg hat" attracted the notice of the police by his habit of going to the turnstile of the Atlantic Avenue subway station, pulling the bar toward him and slipping through the narrow opening, thus getting a free trip, a thing the subway people simply hate.

But what I am leading up to is this. Appearing before Magistrate John R. Starkey at the Flatbush police court, he continued to wear his Homburg hat. When a court attendant removed it, he put it on again. In fact he kept putting it on all through the proceedings, though he must have been aware that this is not done.

It is a pleasure to me to expose this gauche person in print. Michael Marness (67), of 473 Brooklyn Ave., Brooklyn. That'll learn you, Mike.



#### Overlapping

Suggestions that some disgruntlement is being expressed by Electrical Trade Union guerrillas at the present situation seem to have substance. Instances have been discovered in which one-day strikes have coincided with voluntary absenteeism.

"Author writing on reincarnation invites letters from those with personal experience of same."

Daily Telegraph advertisement

"Dear Sir: When you were a king in Babylon, and I was a Christian slave . . ."

# Five Rounds Rapid

BY WILFRED FIENBURGH

"I WON'T detain you long, gentlemen," said the Brigadier. "In fact I will hand you over now to the Lt.-Col. who will demonstrate the new rifle."

"I haven't much to say," said the Lt.-Col. "Actually I'll start right away showing you the rifle. Carry on, Sergeant-Major!"

The R.S.M. stepped forward, six foot odd of military perfection from his crisp haircut to the gleaming toe-caps of his ammunition boots.

"Gentlemen," he said, "here we have—the new rifle."

Good old Army, I thought, true to form—from Brigadier to Sergeant-Major in five seconds flat. And the R.S.M. was a living distillation of all Army instructors. Standing rigidly to attention he slapped the butt. "The butt," he explained. He clicked the trigger. "The trigger," he told us. He grasped the barrel. "And here we have—the barrel."

We all slid backwards in time. There was the M.P. who had been a Brigadier, and the M.P. who had been a Wing-Commander, and the M.P. who had been a Warrant Officer in the Camel Corps. I was back in the barrack room at Winchester, ungainly in my new boots, self-conscious in my denims, trying hard to think up an intelligent question so that the platoon officer would say to himself "Smart recruit that, must watch him." The art of the perceptive question is to know the answer before you ask.

"Now," said the R.S.M., "this rifle *looks* like a rifle." Dramatic pause. "It *feels* like a rifle."

"Dammit," I wanted to say, "it *is* a rifle." But the shade of the platoon officer was standing beside me. The smart recruit does not make funny cracks unless he wants to spend Saturday afternoon cleaning the Sergeants' mess.

It was, I thought, very civil of the Army to let us play with their new rifle. It was, I knew, no simple question of transporting fourteen M.P.s from New Palace Yard to Mill Hill Barracks. There had been preliminary telephone calls from the War Office.

"Sorry, old man. You know what it is. Let 'em fire five rounds rapid—and for goodness' sake see they don't shoot anybody. By the way—have the place in decent shape."

And the C.O. had called the Adjutant, and the Adjutant had called the R.S.M., and the R.S.M. had called the Pioneer Sergeant. "We've got to bull the place up," the R.S.M. had said. So they had. A couple of platoons of recruits had paraded and moved through the barrack area working on the old principle—if it moves salute it, if it's movable hide it, if it's too heavy to move whitewash it. And the President of the Mess Committee had laid on coffee and sherry, the plate had been polished and the regimental drums had been stationed in front of the fireplace. It was a familiar routine—nice to be on the receiving end instead of the organizing end for a change. I felt apologetic. We all felt apologetic. We all knew what had been going on.

Came question time and we advanced our carefully contrived questions. We directed them to the R.S.M., who glanced towards the Lt.-Col., who cocked an eyebrow to the Brigadier, who nodded back to

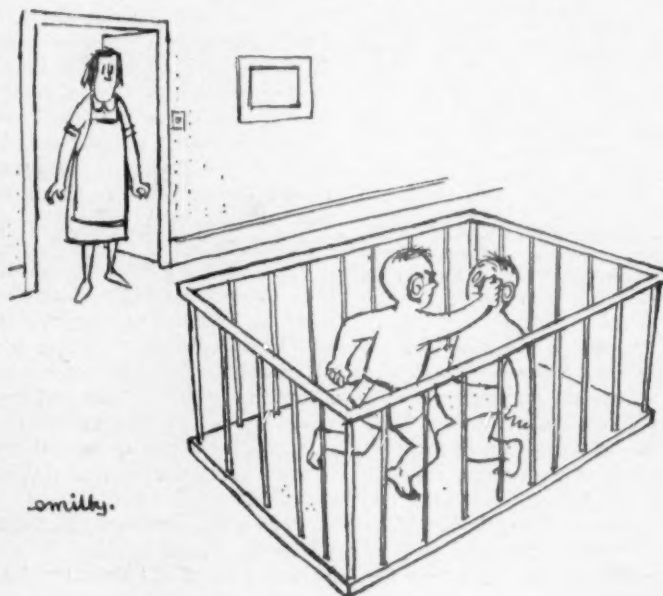
the Lt.-Col., who said "Carry on!" to the R.S.M., who answered the questions. And I was sure that the R.S.M. wanted to lay down his rifle, look us sadly up and down and say "Why don't you LISTEN when I'm talking to you?"

When one of us dredged up a very technical question I felt embarrassed. "Fool!" I found myself thinking. "Never get commissioned if he shows off like that." But the Army had an expert, a Major from my own regiment. I hoped he knew the answer.

"I'm not *really* an expert," said the Major.

"Good show! Well played!" I thought. The first rule of being an Army expert is to pretend that you are accidentally in possession of a stray piece of information you have heard from a civilian and inadvertently remembered. After registering this you are allowed to talk about muzzle velocity without letting the side down.

We all hit the target. We pulverized the target. If our shots wandered a little the R.S.M. was kind. "Of course the rifle needs zeroing to suit you." "Yes," we said gratefully.







# How the Hemingway Got His Bump

BY RICHARD USBORNE

*His spots are the joy of the leopard; his muscles are Hemingway's pride.  
Take care, when thou buzzest the tree-tops, to carry insecticide.  
For a fussy African ibis may force thy 'plane to ground  
In a place where the African midges, mosquitoes and gnats abound.  
Not muscle nor tan in the He-est man, nor Mauser nor '303  
Can keep them away like a fly-gun spray, away from thy wife and thee . . .*

MAXIMS OF BALOO



It was a hot Saturday night at the third *wallo-hollo* from the left after Murchison Falls when Kiboko the Hippopotamus felt a tickling in his ear. Prang the Tick-bird, that lives on the pickings from wrinkled old hippo-hides, was carrying his gossip right to his master's ear.

"Wake up, wake up!" tapped Prang in Kiboko's ear, "I have news for thee!"

Now news for Kiboko was news for all the beasts in the jungle. Not for nothing was Kiboko called the Trumpeter of Entebbe. Had any of his friends ever known Kiboko keep a secret?

He lifted himself six inches higher from the grey-green, greasy and deliciously cool mud, bent his ear forward and listened to Prang.

"On Thursday evening, Lord and Pasture, an aeroplane, *ndegi ulaya*, crashed up-river. Not one of those regular B.O.A.C. jobs on the Khar-toum-Durban route. Those we know, thou and I and all of us. Nay, this

was a small 'plane, such as photographers and hunters use!"

"Listen all!" trumpeted Kiboko, "listen to what a little bird hath told me. There is an aircraft down on the river-bank up-stream. We know not if it be film-folk and friendly, as maybe with Robert Morley or Deborah Kerr aboard. Or if it be a hunter's 'plane, with such as Jim Corbett or Ernest Hemingway."

Now the Law of the Jungle says: "Not all shooting is with cameras. Beware especially the bare-chested writer-man (*mwandikaji*). To get thee into a book he will get thee into his sights first. Confuse not the lone writer-man with the Hollywood crowd, who giggle and bathe and shoot only at their empty gin bottles as they float towards the Falls. That other is a Man. That is all a Man."

*Now, then, he saw the kudu start for the gap, and he was sweating with happiness in the cold half light, and then they halted and faced into the wind, stretching their heads to his side of the valley. That was one of the things he had saved to write, the kudu, and the oily smell of his rifle, and the exotic smell of her letter in the pocket of his bush-shirt in the*

*early morning. She had been in Venice then, and the Greek prince had been after her and he hadn't known that when he shot the great kudu in the dawn then.*

Then 'Mbu the Mosquito came singing in for her supper.

"Silence, all!" she hummed, "I have been to the scene of the accident . . . I and my myriad sisters. It is the Hemingways, Ernest and his 'mke, Poppa and Momma. Two accidents have they had . . . the one a crash from tree-tops-height—a flock of silly ibis hit them—and they spent Thursday night under our guardianship" . . . 'Mbu smiled a very small smile, licking her lips. "On Friday a second 'plane arrived, and they tried to say good-bye to us in too much of a hurry. *That* 'plane crashed too."

"And ye?" said Twiga the Giraffe. He had been standing as look-out man lest the others be surprised bathing. "Did ye, thou and thy sisters, 'Mbu, attend the Hemingways' slumbers last night, too?"

"Slumbers?" buzzed 'Mbu, "Slumbers? They did not slumber! Poppa, finding the 'plane door jammed with the crash, had just broken it down with his head, and . . ."

Kaa the Rocksnake rippled his thirty feet length up from the shallows. "S-s-s-so! Perhaps Poppa Hemingway reads as well as writes. Perhaps he had read that little story about *me* when, far away and long ago, with half a dozen pile-driving blows of my head (what was it that other *mwandikaji* said? 'A hammer weighing nearly half a ton, driven by a cool, quiet mind living in the handle of it' . . . yes, he could write, that writer-man, too)—with half a dozen blows I broke down the stone-work that was imprisoning Mowgli in the Cold Lairs. Yellow worm, the *bundar-log* had called me . . . but I feasted well that night." Kaa was very vain, and a considerable bore.





"I'm afraid my sides don't split very easily."

"Yea, perhaps Poppa has read my story." He rippled his glossy length again.

"And hast thou read *his*, Kaa?" asked Faru the Rhino. "When Prang the gossip told me that Poppa's story, *Snows of Kilimanjaro*, was to be made into a film, I scanned it again, wondering if there were a part for me. Alas, it is my lot never to be in the *written* story but always to be in the film. Once, I think, Mr. Cherry Kearton or someone took photographs of me—charging, skidding round a turn and apparently falling. Every time Hollywood does an African jungle film that set of pictures of me, or something very like it, is used."

"Was it thou in this film, old

one?" asked Chui the Leopard. "I ask, for it was my grandfather who was 'the dried and frozen carcass' found at 19,710 feet on the top of Kilimanjaro and in the first paragraph of Poppa's story. 'No one has explained what the leopard was seeking at that altitude,' wrote Poppa. I could tell him. My grandfather hated the Hollywood crowds, and he fled up the great mountain to avoid a new set of them, arriving to make a new film. He died, cold, but unbothered by cameras."

*This Jim Corbett, who was he? Who was he, writing of leopards and tigers in India, shooting with a muzzle-loader in his youngest days, counting the cost of cartridges,*

*writing simply, telling a dam fine story? Why had this Corbett snarled up the jungle-writing market? That was another thing he meant to write, a letter to his New York agent, to find out if Jim Corbett was getting more for his stories than him, Poppa. Or should it be 'than he'? Writing was something that you went on learning. You never seemed to know it all.*

"Perhaps it was I in the recent film of *The Snows*," answered Faru. "Perhaps it was. The same charge, the same high-speed turn, the same stumble. Gregory Peck had, it seemed, shot me, saving the life of himself and Susan Hayward. Didst thou witness, in the film, Susan





Hayward being sick with relief behind a bush when she knew their lives were safe? That I had never seen in a film before. 'Twas verily a new gimmick to put on to the old sequence of the charge."

Kiboko rumbled, like summer thunder. "Enough of this loose talk! We should move up-river to see the travellers!" He had been distressed to his marrow by this *bandar-log* chatter of films, film-stars and Hollywood. Had he not seen Ava Gardner bathing during the making of *Mogambo*? . . . That was a lovely secret he *had* kept from all. He wished to change the subject from films altogether.

But on the bank J. Fred Muggs the Chimp started to laugh aloud. "I was photographed by John Huston holding hands with Ava Gardner. I was photographed with Ava Gardner holding my hand!"

Mother Muggs caught him a

whack over the ear that sent him sprawling. No love-tap, that. And as he picked himself up he found himself far too close to the snorting nose of Kiboko himself.

"Speak not of Ava Gardner, *bandar-wallah*!" Kiboko flamed. "The Law of the Jungle says: 'A River Goddess must be worshipped by the River folk alone.' We be not all one folk, thou and we. Go, get

thee gone to thy tree-tops, and may the next 'plane that flies too near dislodge *thee*, thou eater of nuts, lackey of Bertram Mills and Commercial Television!"

\* \* \* \* \*

At this moment, there floated down to the pool an old sleeping-bag, in the tapes of which had got tangled up an early-morning chest-expanding exerciser.

"I recognize that sleeping-bag!" hummed 'Mbu the mosquito shrilly. "I last saw it in Spain in the Civil War. In a film called *For Whom the Bell Tolls*! This must have floated down from Poppa's 'plane-crash. We must return, my sisters and I, and visit them quickly before dawn."

And all the animals left the *wallo-hollo*, and, some running, some wading, some swimming, they headed up-stream, with Kilimanjaro just taking the first light of distant dawn on their right hand. When they arrived they found one burnt-out 'plane, the oily streaks of a pleasure steamer that had gone on again towards Kampala, and no Hemingways.

*That was the day of his fifty-fourth birthday and he remembered how The Kraut had said "Take it easy now, won't you, Poppa?" and he had bent a poker with his hands and torn a pack of cards in half with his teeth. Not bad at fifty-four to live your own story now, then, to read your own obits, to put eighty-year-old Somerset Maugham off the literary front pages for a day, and he remembered all the shrapnel he had taken in on the Piave and the time he was knocked down by a pram in Central Park. That was something else he wouldn't be writing about now, then.*

5 5

## The New Rifle

CRACK! Bang! The volleys go from side to side—

Words, sixty a minute (semi-automatic).  
When there's a killing issue to decide  
Safe politicians dare be democratic.  
Come the new calibre, come a crueller war,  
The politician is the same small bore.

PATRIC DICKINSON



## Clock-face Theory and Practice

BY G. D. TAYLOR

"III," it says, "Use IV, except on clock-face." The implications of this advice might be less far-reaching if it were contained in a handbook for watchmakers, or in one of the more diffuse works of reference. Its appearance in the *Authors' and Printers' Dictionary*, however, leads at once to a startling conclusion: some persons are engaged in the authorship of clock-faces and others in the printing of them—the printing, that is, on paper, since impressions in any other medium are the concern of engravers, photographers, sky-writers, monumental masons and people like that. No doubt it should be obvious that this is so; that every clock-face we have ever seen in print has been composed, revised, and even passed through the hands of a sub-editor trained to fasten on such a blunder as "IV." Yet the imagination cannot quite bring itself to detail.


These authors, are they established men who dash off a clock-face or two as pot-boilers between novels? Or are they young men,

poets perhaps, striving to free themselves from the tyranny of words? Do they suddenly, while at lunch, see a clock-face, perfect, whole, and scribble it in a dirty notebook to the embarrassment of their guests? Do they send it off in the normal way (Dear Sir,—I submit a clock-face) with a stamped and addressed envelope? To whom do they send it?

*The Times* publishes a clock-face every morning at the head of the leader-page, but I had always assumed—if I am wrong I beg the authors' pardon—that it was the same clock-face repeated day by day. It always says six minutes past six—to convey, I suppose, the idea of time standing still; and whenever I see it it perpetrates this typographical howler. It says "IV." *The Times* is entitled to have its own rules—and does so: it says "oversea," for example, when the unlettered would say "overseas"—but it would seem unnecessarily perverse to fly in the face of the acknowledged authority and have a rule saying "III, use IV, even on clock-face," and to reject

manuscript after manuscript on that account alone.

Failing *The Times* it is hard to say exactly where one would place a clock-face. The last resort, presumably, is the trade press, but even here we come up against snags. *The Watchmaker, Jeweller and Silversmith* is published monthly, and he is a very fortunate author who has more than one acceptance per issue. Payment is at the rate of £3 3s. per thousand words, and even supposing that I, II, III, and the rest (one could almost write a clock-face oneself) each counts as a word, which would seem exceedingly generous, there is not much more than 9d. a month to be made out of *The Watchmaker, Jeweller and Silversmith*.

A further piece of information apparently intended for clock-face authors, this time about the hands, is contained in the same dictionary. "Hand," it says, "(typ.), , called fist." No distinction is drawn between hour-fists and minute-fists, and quite properly. That is a matter for the author's discretion. Here the dictionary is fighting a losing battle against the debasement of standards. A vestigial fist survives, but devoid of clock-face, to point to various times of the day in *Bradshaw*. Elsewhere it has been superseded by a device popularly described as a finger, but known to the dictionary and its readers as a "spread rule" (—).

It is clear that less than justice is being done to the late Mr. F. Howard Collins, the author of this painstaking work. We appeal to *The Times* as the leading, indeed the only, exponent of clock-face journalism to give new hope to authors and printers everywhere by publishing a pure, clear, and unequivocal



# Cold War Comfort

BY C. H. DEWHURST

SO much has been nationalized in Eastern Germany that when I arrived at Potsdam to take over our Mission to the Soviets I rather thought I would have to reduce my sense of humour to the local norm. It was with relief, therefore, that in my travels around the Soviet Zone I found that no Five-Year Plan had yet harnessed Russian humour, and that Mr. Vishinsky was definitely not to be chief of a new Department of State Wit but would continue to confine his efforts to Lake Success.

I think this unexpected freedom was first brought home to me in a drive down to Leipzig, where the otherwise dull *autobahn* was illuminated by fine and striking examples of Soviet propaganda, in which the Russians are—as you would expect—past-masters (in the present tense)

and naturally pre-eminent. That is one reason why they never entrust it to the fumbling hands of local authorities—for what can Germans know about Germans?

"All Germans Round One Table" was, we noted, very fashionable—I suppose because, with the existing economy drive, it's cheaper than having two.

"Long Live the Five-Year Plan" brought the same question from my chauffeur as I was about to ask myself: "How?" "Long Live Our Great Leader" was far better, though it seemed to a certain extent to be offset by a notice a little farther on which stated that "We Germans Need No Master." I suppose the Russians have learnt that the Teutonic tradition is in favour of Masters, but preferably for short periods.

Of quite a different nature was "Ami, Go Home." The Chief of the French Military Mission was, I hear, somewhat incensed at the first apparition of this ungracious order, for he had only just left Berlin when he noticed it.

There were other cheerful notices to enliven the final part of my journey to Leipzig, such as "To H with the A-bomb" (or words to that effect).

Having arrived at the town I proceeded to one of the local hotels to drink a cheap coffee at 5/- a cup and sat next to a rather disconsolate Red Army officer, who tore his eyes away from an article entitled (I noted) "Are We Tractor-Worthy?" to inquire if I was American. On my replying that I was not, he thawed a little and asked after Sir Winston Churchill's health (yes, we did speak Russian). I said it was as good now as three-quarters of a century ago, with which he sighed. "Yes, Churchill is a great man." Following up the conversation I inquired "Why do you think so?"

"Because he paints pictures."

"But many artists paint pictures. Churchill also directed the war for us," I ventured.

"That is why he is a great man," replied my Red Army friend; "artists don't usually win wars."

Wondering whence came this unexpected knowledge about Churchill, I thought I would follow up the matter to see if the Captain had an angle on any other British politicians.

"Have you perhaps heard of Comrade Attlee?"

"No, who is he?"

"He is Leader of the Opposition," I replied.

My friend frowned at this. "Why do you allow opposition?"

"Because we believe in democracy."

"So do we," bridled the Captain, "but not in people opposed to it."

The conversation ended abruptly with the arrival of a sinister, autocratic-looking character in a civilian mackintosh (this being before Beria's dismissal), so I paid the bill and left the hotel to walk round the town,



"Yeah, purely social..."



followed by the usual entourage of astonished Germans, who always thought my presence presaged some sort of political *anschluss*.

On the return drive I saw a tattered placard which we had missed on the way down. It must have stood there at least a year and read "We are voting YES," and showed a colourful crowd raising their fists to a blue (yet doveless) sky. I could see my driver was perplexed.

"What does that mean, sir? Are they Germans?"

"That," I replied, "means 'yes', though whether the crowd is German or not I couldn't say. But it doesn't really matter, for it is the stock placard, suitable to all occasions. The Russians don't believe in negative lives. Besides, they have a sense of humour."

As we neared Berlin the *auto-lahn* divided, the left fork being prominently marked "To the Democratic Sector."

"Which way?" asked my driver.

"Right," I replied drily.

2 2

"Cloud will spread to other districts and there is a chance of snow. It will be sold all day."

*Daily Telegraph*

Should knock the ice-cream trade.



## Housewives' Choice

GOOD morning, ladies! It's true  
I should have said "Hullo, housewives, how do!"  
But I couldn't, it sounded rude  
And so easily misconstrued.  
Possibly you may think  
As you pause reflectively by your kitchen sink  
Washing your infant's rompers  
That I'm not like other compères.  
And it is a trifle absurd  
That I, Geoffrey Finch-Massingberd  
(Winchester and the Third),  
For reasons of B.B.C. economy,  
Not because of a natural gift for matutinal bonhomie,  
Should have been asked to fill in  
In the absence of Godfrey Winn.  
I regard my assignment  
As an opportunity for a valuable investigation into  
psychological alignment.  
Now why does Mrs. Hughes,  
Of One, The Bogside, Brackley-under-Ouse,  
Choose *Riverside Blues*?  
Would it be excessive

To suggest that she is ever so slightly manic-depressive?  
A postcard from Pwllheli  
Says "Oh my Beloved Daddy, sung by Nellie  
Melba, would be such a treat  
For thirteen wives who live in Station Street."  
A revealing communication,  
Mass father fixation.  
A Mrs. James of Rye  
Wants music from the film *The Egg and I*.  
The implication hid  
Is, naturally, "The Ego and the Id."  
Clearly there is room for a survey  
On what makes the housewives of Britain so worried  
and nervy.  
To help my investigation  
Of this deplorable country-wide frustration  
Please write your repressions to me  
c/o the B.B.C.  
And, ladies, don't delay,  
Go to a psycho-analyst to-day.  
I advise an immediate visit.  
Good morning, housewives, or is it?

SYLVIA CLAYTON



# PRIESTLEY'S PRIMER

*Lessons for Little Ones*

## TAX-ES

**W**HEN you grow up you will pay tax-es. These are big. In old-en times they were small. Men were not so wise then. They did not know a lot of things we know now. And in old-en times there were ty-rants. Now we choose our ru-lers. Some are red, some are blue. Some are fat, some are thin. But the tax-es are just big, all the time. If you work hard you pay more and more. The men who take the mon-ey from you do not like you much. They ask for more and more. They think you tell lies. Or they do not know why you work so hard. Per-haps it is not you but your hard work they do not like. There is a way to be rich and not pay tax-es. The trick is found in the Ci-ty. Men get rich there by speak-ing on the 'phone or eat-ing and drink-ing in grill rooms. Then they do not pay these tax-es. Such men laugh a lot when tax-es are talked a-bout. They know

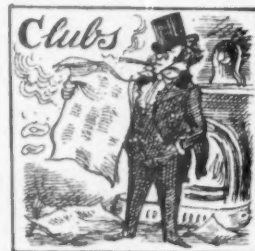


they would be fools to work hard. It is more fun not to pay tax-es. In the Ci-ty these men sing and dance all day long.

## CLUBS

**I**N a good club all is old. The car-pets and the chairs are old. The mem-bers call each oth-er *Old Boy* and *Old Man*. They buy pink gins. Im-port-ant ones stand in front of the fire and clear their throats in an im-port-ant way. Some old ones sit in deep chairs and growl at pa-pers. Oth-ers sleep and snore. Oth-ers go in to the card room to play bridge at two o'clock and six o'clock. But this is on-ly dur-ing the week, for at the week-end they are rest-ing from their hard work. Some men live in clubs where they eat a large break-fast,

which is an old cus-tom. They have their clothes brushed for them and their boots cleaned. These men say that life is now ve-ry hard. A good club has one room full of books known as the Li-bra-ry. This is the best room for one who wants to be a-lone and would like to take a nap. It is a rule in fine old clubs that no bus-i-ness should be talked there. This is not a hard rule for the men who be-long to fine old clubs. Ei-ther they have no bus-i-ness at all or have no wish to talk a-bout it. Such clubs are for men on-ly. But la-dies may go at times to eat lunch or din-ner and when they do they smile at each oth-er in a fun-ny way. At these times no grand se-crets come out as they do when it is men on-ly. It would not do if la-dies could say *A Man at the Club Told Me*, but this is what men keep on say-ing. This is how they learn se-crets of tri-als and what the P.M. said and the queer ru-mour a-bout Old Thing. You must not call this scan-dal. It is just fel-lows hav-ing a chat in their clubs. All are de-cent fel-lows. The rest have been black-balled and so have to be-long to mixed clubs. These do not count.



## FREE-DOM

**F**REE-DOM is not doing what you like. That is out of date and wrong. We have a new sort. We have it in all parts of the world. It is praised at big din-ners, and men who are drunk clap hard. It is in all the pa-pers. In this free-dom there are more and more laws and rules you must not break. You do not make these laws and rules. You do not have that kind of fun. But if you break them you must pay a fine or go to gaol. Those who make them get good pen-sions. When you grow up you can vote for this free-dom. You can vote blue or red. The free-dom is the same. At vo-ting times the laws and rules do not come in-to the talk. All are for free-dom. The talk is just like that of big din-ners. But there is no food, no drink, no fine ci-gars, for you. More and more pol-ice in all lands help this free-dom. In

Rus-sia they help it with mach-ine guns. In Am-er-i-ca with guns and tear gas. In Eng-land with thick hard trunch-cons. Some men do not like this. They are



called un-sound men and do not get pen-sions and nice rib-bons to wear with their big din-ner clothes. So their wives are sad or an-gry. No doubt it serves such men right.

#### Dogs

IN our land it is dogs that are liked best of all. It is the dogs' heav-en. As soon as they see an-y dog, a lot of wo-men cry *Oh—is-n't he sweet!* They do not do this with peo-ple. And it is bosh. Some dogs are sweet. Some are not so sweet. And some are stink-ing rot-ten curs. But this is not the sound de-cent Eng-lish view. You must be read-y to shout with joy or burst in-to tears when a dog is spok-en of. If not, you are a rot-ter and a cad. Books are writ-ten a-bout dear dog-gies and sell bet-ter than hot cakes. If a dog comes in-to a play or film, it is all up with the plot and the act-ors. At once you can hear the cries of *Sweet*. In some hous-es in the coun-try you can-not have pro-per talk at all be-cause of dogs. Just as one lot of dogs is done with, an-oth-er lot comes, sweet-er still. If you get tired of this, then they think some-thing is wrong with you. If the dogs do not like you, there is some-thing wrong with you—for *they know*. How did this dear sweet dog



Thing get go-ing? When did it start? And why? Do the Eng-lish hope they will be dogs in their next lives? Are we work-ing up to be-ing dogs? I ad-mit that a good dog can be a fine friend and one too who does not talk too much. But most dogs are not up to much. They are like third-rate act-ors, all false charm and show-ing off. But I had bet-ter say no more. As it is I shall get in-to a row.

#### GRAND-FATH-ER

HERE comes Grand-fath-er, still smo-king his old pipe. He is not hand-some. He is fat and old. There is egg on his tie. He is grum-bling of course. No-bod-y cares ex-cept one or two oth-er fat old men who come to drink his whis-ky. And per-haps they on-ly pre-tend to list-en. We love Grand-fath-er of course but we do not ad-mire him. Moth-er and Gran-ny say this does not mat-ter be-cause he ad-mires him-self so much, but can this be true? What does he find to ad-mire? His hair and clothes smell of smoke. He has not much mon-ey now. But then he eats and drinks so much. And he does not write nice things an-y more. He does not ask to play games for the B.B.C. He will not have a TV set. He is out of date. Ev-en when he is giv-en a chance to be pho-to-graphed with a film star, he will not go. He is rude to im-port-ant peo-ple. He does not care if he mis-ses great occ-a-sions. He does not be-lieve what the pa-pers say. He just will not join in pro-per-ly. He laughs at big sol-emn things and yet will be sad, a-bout some-thing quite small. A lot of peo-ple think he is hor-rid. We do not think he is so bad but then we are used to him. But of course if he goes on get-ting fat-ter and old-er, and grum-bling and rum-bling, we shall soon have had e-nough of him. Per-haps he will drop dead or be turned out of this coun-try. We do not think, as he says, he will give a damn. J. B. PRIESTLEY



#### British to the Core—or Nearly

*Two foreign frogs, Rana ridibunda and Rana esculenta, have invaded this country and are destroying our native species*

"BREK-kek-kek-kex coax coax!"

Hark! British frogs face fierce attacks.

*Rana ridibunda*, in Romney Marsh,

Croaks his alien challenge, crude and harsh,

While in Hampstead, French *Rana esculenta*

Plots a batrachian attentat.

O weep for our own *Rana temporaria*, his tadpoles and his wife,

Sad casualties in the battle for the British way of life!

Noisy *Ridibunda*, with imported music itches

To fill, like Drury Lane, our ponds and ditches.

And plump *Esculenta* boasts he's already able

To infect with foreign fancy our British table.

O Tempora! O Mores! Must our lives change wholly?

"Heigh-ho!" says Anthony Rowley.

LAWRENCE BENEDICT



# Hands Off Fishmongers!

BY H. F. ELLIS

THE Merchandise Marks Act, which came into force last week, may have caused a certain amount of inconvenience to those manufacturers and retail traders who like a touch of bravado in the description of their wares. It is now, for instance, illegal to label as "UNSHRINKABLE" any article that shrinks, so that in the months between the passing of the Act and its coming into force a great deal of unstitching of those little tabs at the back of vests must have been going on. Again, you must not print "CHINA" on the bottom of earthenware cups and plates—a niggling little piece of legislation that has meant hours of scratching-out in many a well-intentioned China and Glass Department (itself, one supposes, due to be renamed the China, Earthenware, Stoneware, Glass and Plastic Department). Greengrocers, for all I know, may have been compelled to scrawl the prefix "UN-" on those "SELECTED" labels they have such a weakness for.

But the withers of fishmongers have been unwrung. Fishmongers, who dwell apart in so many ways, are not by nature labellers. They prefer to let their merchandise speak for itself. It is a part of their strong feeling for artistry and décor, which in turn stems from the absence of a glass front and from the fine natural slope of the display-slab with its rich

opportunities for the intelligent use of perspective and foreshortening effects. When a man has laid an enormous turbot at the head of his slab, flanked it with cod and halibut set at right angles, and then by way of brill and hake, sole and plaice, herring and mackerel, led the eye gently down to a great heap of prawns, with a lobster at either corner hanging its massive claws over the public pavement, he is not likely to ruin his shining wet canvas by spiking a battered old tin disc marked "CHOICE" into the turbot's flawless white stomach. He has more sense, and sensibility. The furthest a good fishmonger will go in the direction of commercializing his art is to put "TO-DAY'S PRICE" on a box of kippers—and then he very rightly keeps apart, on a kind of shelf or counter to one side.

The Government, unable for these reasons to get at fishmongers through the Merchandise Marks Act, is now, I see, creeping up on them by another route. The White Fish Authority, not content with launching its "Whispering Fish" campaign, has once again risen from its slab and has now set "British Museum experts" (portentous phrase) to work sorting through the various names fishmongers give to fish "with the object of finding a scientific though attractive name for each type." When this great work has been done

—and a glimpse of experts sorting the names of fish, in some quiet corner of the Museum, is something that television might consider bringing into every British home—the White Fish Authority "will ask the Food Minister to make regulations requiring fishmongers to label each type with the specified name."

One sees the point, of course. If fishmongers won't use labels, misleading or otherwise, the only way to preserve the egalitarian principle of inconveniencing everybody equally is to *compel* them to use labels. You can hardly compel them to use labels saying "UNSHRINKABLE" or "WATER-PROOF," accurate though these descriptions might well be, but you *can* compel them to say what the fish *are*; and since nobody seems to be agreed about what in fact some of them ought to be called, the first step, clearly, is to get a body of experts together. Once that has been done, you are in a fair way to being able to prosecute somebody for an offence, sooner or later.

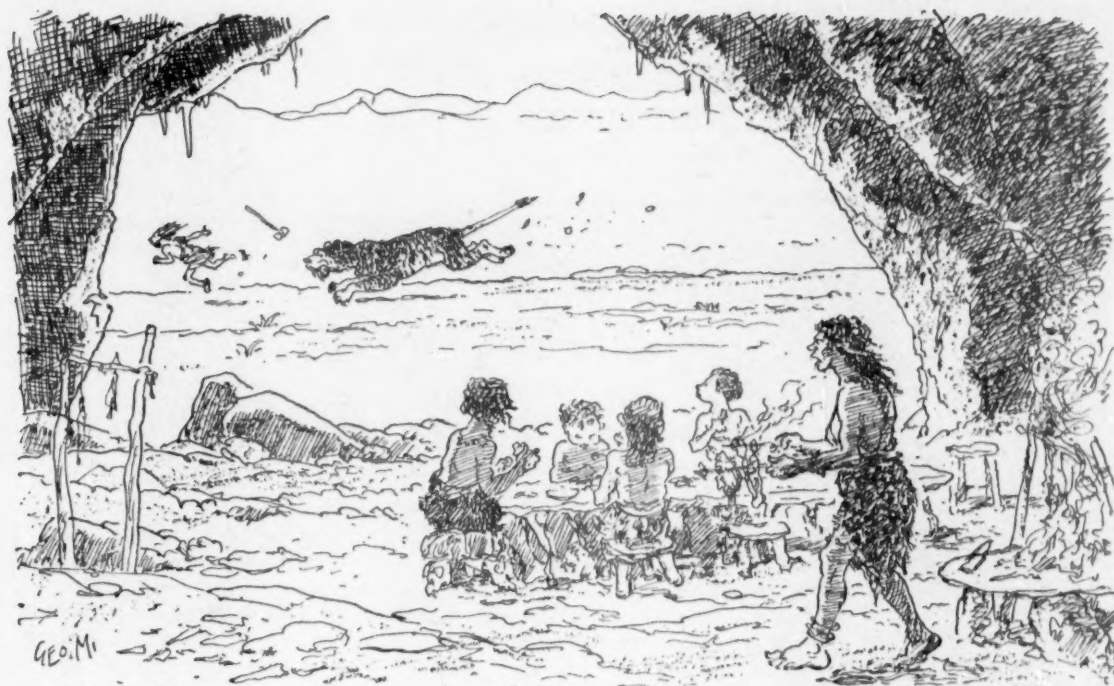
A central figure in this approaching commotion will be the dogfish. Apparently, a number of rascally fishmongers have taken to calling this not very lovable creature by other names—"flake" for instance—and this, according to a spokesman of the White Fish Authority, "confuses the housewife." The reason these scoundrels use alternative names for the dogfish is, if one remembers rightly, that at one time the country was very short of food, all kinds of unusual but more or less edible fish were urged upon the public by the Government, and it was found that people simply would not buy anything called "dogfish." So other names had to be found. But that is by the way. Obviously it will not do to have the housewife confused by hearing the fishmonger refer to the dogfish as "flake." What is wanted is something else again, something at once scientific and attractive.

The scientific name for a dogfish, confused housewives may like to note, is *Acanthias vulgaris*.

If the dogfish, with its scientific label, could be set aside, along with



"It looks all right, doesn't it . . . ?"



"He always finds something to do just as dinner is ready."

the box of kippers, on some inconspicuous side-shelf, I should not greatly mind this attack on the right of fishmongers to lead their amiable lives in peace. The purity and dignity of the central slab would be unaffected. But the Food Minister, it will be observed, is to be asked "to make regulations requiring fishmongers to label *each type* with the specified name." Nothing is to escape; neither brill nor hake, nor bream nor halibut; not the familiar cod, nor the herring itself, that never confused a housewife yet. The whole slab is to bristle with a forest of disfiguring tickets. Even the lordly turbot (unless the experts control themselves to a degree beyond my expectations) will bear the ridiculous label "*Rhombus maximus*."

That seems to me to be making a mockery of fishmongering.

"A strong guest brought down a 112ft., 70-ton blast furnace stove in the Bilston, Staffordshire, iron and steel works of . . ."

Daily Mail

Next trick.

## Spare a Crust

I NEVER offered to pet a puppy  
But it bit my hand at sight.  
I never chose the pick of the litter  
But what it died in the night.  
Always the price of the doggie in the window

Was more than I could pay:  
But the Basset, the Bloodhound and the Basenji  
Had stolen my heart away.

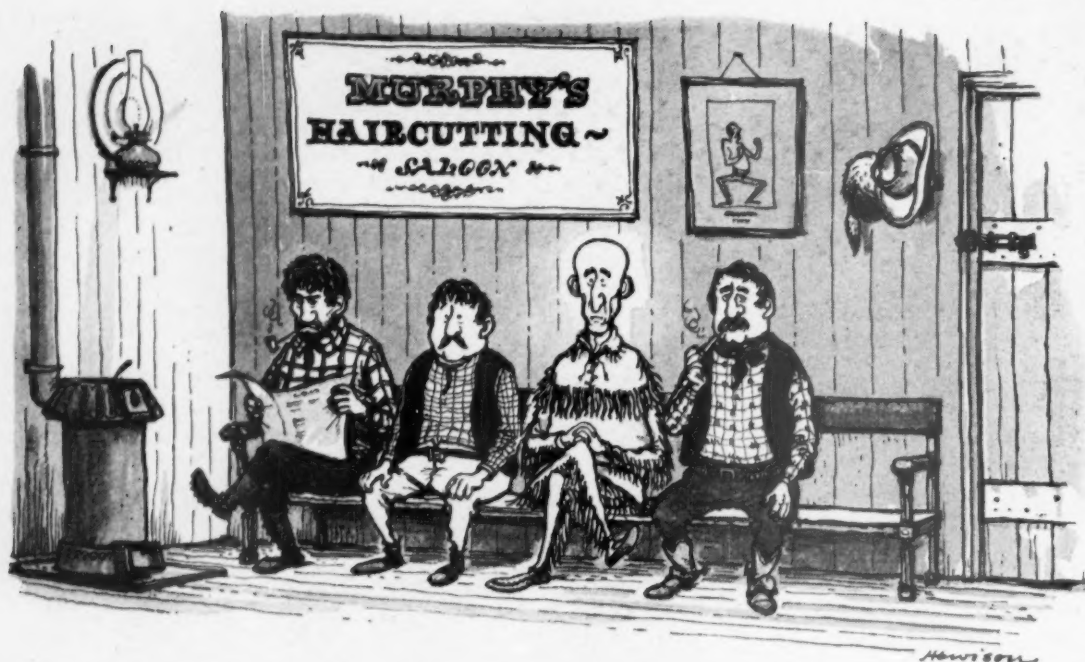
I peopled the empty fields of evening  
With sly Schipperkes and Skyes.  
The shy Shih Tzus and Kerry Blues  
They scampered behind my eyes.  
I winked at a wealthy woman's Maremma  
Who sneered and would not play:  
But the Schnauzers and the Doberman Pinschers  
Had stolen my heart away.

I could not get a Saluki on loan  
Or a Great Dane as a gift;  
And the Dalmatians and Alsations  
Were far too heavy to lift.

Whenever a Welsh Springer lingered  
At last it would not stay:  
But the Chihuahuas and the Lhasa Apsos  
Had stolen my heart away.

And when at last I went to Olympia  
With several practical schemes,  
The hard-faced, Moscow-minded men  
Had trampled upon my dreams.  
I brought the feed and a collar and lead,  
And I had the money to pay:  
But Mr. Haxell and Mr. Stevens  
Had driven my dogs away:  
They had ousted the Bassets and Basenjis,  
The Schnauzers and the Doberman Pinschers,  
The Chihuahuas and the Lhasa Apsos  
Who had stolen my heart away.

P. M. HUBBARD



## The Last of the Line

BY LORD KINROSS

**F**OR the last time we digested our morning papers at the breakfast table. To-morrow, with the March of Progress, they would arrive an hour or so later. For to-night the Lune Valley Railway, which brought them, was to close for ever to passenger traffic, and its end was to be marked by an appropriate farewell entertainment.

Before Railways were British this was a stretch of the "Little North Western," running from Clapham Junction (*sic*) to Ingleton, Kirkby Lonsdale (discreetly "1½ miles from Kirkby Lonsdale"), Barbon, Middleton, Sedbergh, Low Gill and Tebay. It was a relic of that reactionary pioneer spirit which induced independent companies to blaze rival trails to the North.

The Midland Railway, finding its passengers delayed on the "Little North Western," went off and built a bold new parallel line to the east of it. Creating, on uninhabited fells, labour camps with stirring names like Sebastopol, Jericho and Salt Lake City, they performed Herculean feats against insuperable odds with prodigious loss of life. They flung viaducts across impassable ravines,

changed the course of raging torrents, bored fathomless tunnels through the impenetrable gritstone of the Pennines, constructed, with double walls of shale, the highest main line station in England, then harnessed forty horses together to drag the first locomotive up from Ingleton to Ribbleshead. Thus they linked the rugged Backbone of England with such pleasures of Eden as Culgaith, Langwathby, Little Salkeld, Cumwhinton and Carlisle.

To-day all such period anomalies are being set to rights. Trails are being systematically unblazed. Already progress is such that *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*, prophetically, carries no map. Thus branch lines, like that of the Lune, can be done away with overnight, without anyone but their mere users being any the wiser. Main lines, like that of the Ribble, will doubtless follow, until the Backbone of England is virgin ground once more. Thus the Men of the Fells will be confined to the fells and the Men of the Vales to the vales.

That night after dark, on the platform of Ingleton Station, the Men of the Lune herded mournfully

together, awaiting the last train, the 6.52, which was to spell their return to isolation. Our invitation, from the Lord of a Manor whose grandfather once hired "specials" on the line, read "Heated Private Coach, Supper, Brass Band"; and the brass band, blinking beneath the magnesium lights of a TV camera, was now playing, erratically and lugubriously, a dirge. The invitation said also "Travelling Clothes," so the local gentry, squires and such with their ladies, were arriving top-hatted and bonneted in the quaint Victorian costume of the days of railways, and were being shown to the ladies' waiting-room. ("It's sexless for the evening," the Station Master explained.) They were received by a learned one of their kind, his top-hat swathed in crêpe, his hand clutching the last forty-eight first-class cheap day return tickets from Ingleton to Low Gill, at 8s. 6d. apiece.

Presently the train snorted in, fashionably late, from Clapham Junction, creating a stir of emotion: the last and also the longest of its line, since three special coaches, old-world and splendid from Euston



itself, were attached to it. They had indeed been trundling up and down the line, all day long, to draw warmth from the engine. The gentry crowded into them, followed by the band, and gaining added warmth from the more serviceable costumes of their period: ladies in Inverness capes and fur pelisses, well-padded bustles and trailing skirts of heavy silk and jet embroidery; gentlemen in spat-covered shoes and double frock-coats, deer-stalker hats and jackets buttoned high at the neck.

One of them was vexed to learn that his Edwardian suit was to-day in the highest fashion; another that his tweed Norfolk jacket was of the cut now worn by Royalty. A third reminisced, in maudlin style, about the Good Old Days, when it was possible to travel from London to Edinburgh by the West Coast route, and when trains ran all the way from Aberdeen to Penzance and back, enabling Oxford undergraduates to dine and wine on them in comfort.

Champagne soon flowed, shooting its corks exuberantly right and left, from the unaccustomed tilt of the train, while bustles were slapped and whiskers pulled and velvet collars and feather boas lovingly stroked. Smoked salmon was served with a silver trowel, used to lay the foundation-stone of the Low Gill viaduct in 1859, and was followed by seven hundred and fifty sausages.

At each gas-lit stone-built Victorian station—all but Middleton, now become a farmhouse, its platform removed to pave the garden of a squire—the people crowded to the windows, smiling wet-eyed through the steam, in a sadly reactionary spirit, to mourn the passing of the train and applaud the costumes of the gentry. At the junction of Low Gill, high among the fells, their coaches rested in a siding, warned specially by a stationary engine, while expresses roared down and the rest of the train puffed up to Tebay and back again.

On its return the engine was crowned with a wreath of laurel by the Lady of a Manor, eloquently commemorating ninety-three years of Lune travel, and deploring the end of this chapter in local history, while the band, now stoked with

beer, stood on the platform beneath the gas lamps and played, less erratically, "Will ye no' come back again?" As the now convivial train returned to Ingleton, it lamented away, cheeks bursting, in the guard's van, its top-hatted conductor shutting his eyes under stress of emotion.

A Station Master, who had joined the train, swayed down the corridor with a glass of Kümmel in his hand, protesting: "What's twenty-one years of losing money? They should have let us go on for another seven, just so as we could reach our century." An official from the South raised three half-hearted cheers for British Railways, then retired to his compartment to finish a bottle of champagne with his fiancée. The engine keened fitfully into the night, facing a salvo of rockets at every station, until, gloriously late, it came to rest by the platform at Ingleton, breathing its last amid wreaths of steam. As it did so snow began to fall, soundlessly, tactfully eliminating all trace of the line.

The gentry, having omitted to order sleepers, retired sadly to the cars by which they are now for ever condemned to travel. The people now stoically face their return to a coaching age, over the rolling English road, in which the coach has become a bus and the coaching inn a teashop. Unconnecting at Clapham non-Junction, it will save them from travelling far. Refusing heavy luggage and porters to carry it, it will save them from leaving home for long. And up between Sedbergh and Low Gill, where no coach can run, they will be saved, as in the past, from leaving home at all.

The Last Train has gone. Only when the Last Bus goes will Progress have marched full circle.

#### Follow This on Your Map

"The 7.34 a.m. Strood (Kent) to Maidstone West train crashed through the level-crossing gates at Aylesbury (Bucks) in fog, but no-one was hurt."

*Portsmouth Evening News*



**Monday, February 1**

Mr. ARTHUR LEWIS, evidently determined that the taxpayer shall continue to subsidize his meals, pressed for further price reductions in the Members' Dining and Tea Rooms.

After Mr. HAROLD WILSON had unsuccessfully tried to secure the immediate adjournment of the House over the Anglo-Japanese trade agreement (of which more will certainly be heard), Members turned to the Opposition motion deploring the decision to adopt the Belgian F.N. rifle for the Forces instead of the improved E.M.2. Notwithstanding the Government's majority, this was an Opposition victory; the Socialists made it clear, by allowing Major WOODROW WYATT to open their case—which he did in a notably discourteous and unconstructive speech—that their object was not only to discuss the relative qualities of the weapons but also to embarrass the Prime Minister, and this they succeeded admirably in doing.

Sir WINSTON (honorary Colonel and Air Commodore), apparently unable to hear most of Major WYATT's speech, spent the time conversing in a loud undertone with Brigadier HEAD, and when he came to speak himself he seemed to have only a limited knowledge of his subject—so much so that at one point he gave up the attempt to answer the questions that were constantly fired at him and let the Secretary of State for War do it. He did not pick up any of the obviously weak points in Major WYATT's speech, but contented himself with repeating, without expanding, the points he had previously

made about arms drill and the value of a butt. Later, becoming impatient at his noisy hearing, he threw a jibe across at Lieutenant-Colonel GEORGE WIGG that misfired badly, and angrily sought the Speaker's protection against Major WYATT's incivilities.

But if in this sense it was an Opposition victory, it was a Pyrrhic one, for the Opposition themselves were utterly discredited by the time the debate was over. Against the expert testimony of Brigadier Sir HARRY MACKESON, Lieutenant-Colonel LEGGE-BOURKE and Brigadier PRIOR-PALMER, little impression was made by Lieutenant-Colonel WIGG's tirade against the Brigade of Guards (whose "select" basis always blinds the Left to the fact that they are the best soldiers in the world), or by R.Q.M.S. JACK JONES's plea for the .280 calibre, which was dropped long ago, or by the forensic plea of Lieutenant R. T. PAGET, R.N.V.R., for a cause of which he did not seem to understand much. But it was left to Brigadier HEAD to clinch the Government case when he quoted a War Office signal indicating that the F.N. was accepted in principle as long ago as January 1951. Wing-Commander STRACHEY, the then Minister of War, and Mr. SHINWELL, the then Minister of Defence, were mightily embarrassed, and tried to cover up by challenging Brigadier HEAD to produce the signal—though of course their ignorance of the signal's existence only worsened their position, since as the responsible Ministers at the time it was their business to know what was going on. "Unfair," whined Mr. SHINWELL, but he was fairly caught out, and he must have known it.

**Tuesday, February 2**

Mr. ARTHUR LEWIS asked a question about the Armed Forces, and was rebuked by Brigadier MEDLICOTT and snubbed by Mr. ARTHUR WATKINSON on behalf of the Ministry of Labour.

Mr. BUTLER gave an account after questions of his doings at the Sydney conference, an account that, in Mr. GAITSKELL's words, "falls in no way behind the statement



issued in Sydney as regards clichés and platitudes." Then Mr. HEAD produced in triumph the War Office signal from which he had quoted on Monday. The irrepressible Colonel Wigg suggested, in effect, that the Army Council responsible for the decision had been operating against the policy of the Ministers (perhaps they were Guards officers?); but no one was convinced.

And so, as Members trooped out, to Wales, that esoteric domain whither the hearty Anglo-Saxon majority of the House seldom tries to penetrate.

### Wednesday, February 3

Mr. ARTHUR LEWIS transferred his attention from the Forces in general to the Royal Air Force in particular, but wisely contented himself with a written answer.

The Lords debated a motion on the amenities of Service officers. Ten noble soldiers, one noble sailor and one noble airman pleaded for a higher standard of living for officers, but it cannot be said that they made an overwhelming case. Too often it seemed that they were living in the past; subsidized hunting and shooting are beautiful dreams, but hardly realistic in 1954. Without intending them any disrespect, the present-day officer is as likely to be a kind of accountant, schoolmaster, shop-keeper, scientist or mechanic as he is to be a dashing man of arms, and what he wants is an extra grant to help educate his children, and the end of the indefensible practice of taxing his allowances.

Lord ALEXANDER, replying for the Government, kept his feet more firmly on the ground than any previous speaker. To-day's officer, he pointed out, must command respect not by his superior standard of living but by his superior technical competence. "As long as the present tension exists it would be wrong to let your Lordships think that there is any immediate prospect of betterment," said the noble Earl.

### Thursday, February 4

Mr. ARTHUR LEWIS asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, "as a means of bringing about a reduction in the present spate of wage demands," he would consider restoring food subsidies to their pre-October 1951 level.

House of Commons:  
Report from Sydney



Brigadier MEDLICOTT followed the inevitable official refusal by a hint that there might be fewer wage demands if Mr. LEWIS and his friends would stop making misleading statements about the cost of living.

Mr. BUTLER made his report about Sydney with unashamed satisfaction and no more clichés than one expects from a front-bench politician. The Commonwealth, it seemed, was on a pretty sound financial footing. Mr. GAITSKELL, however, was not deceived; all he had gathered from the mass of misleading communiqués that had emanated from the Antipodes was that the various Commonwealth ministers had spent their time contradicting one another.

Later on Sir ROBERT BOOTHBY expressed a fear that the Tory party had become the Liberal party—a thought which he found "terrifying." Not unnaturally, Mr. CLEMENT DAVIES, who had seen another hundred-and-fifty-pounds'-worth of Liberalism go down the drain at Ilford North the previous day, was the more at pains to welcome Mr. BUTLER's policy. Mr. JOHN FOSTER,

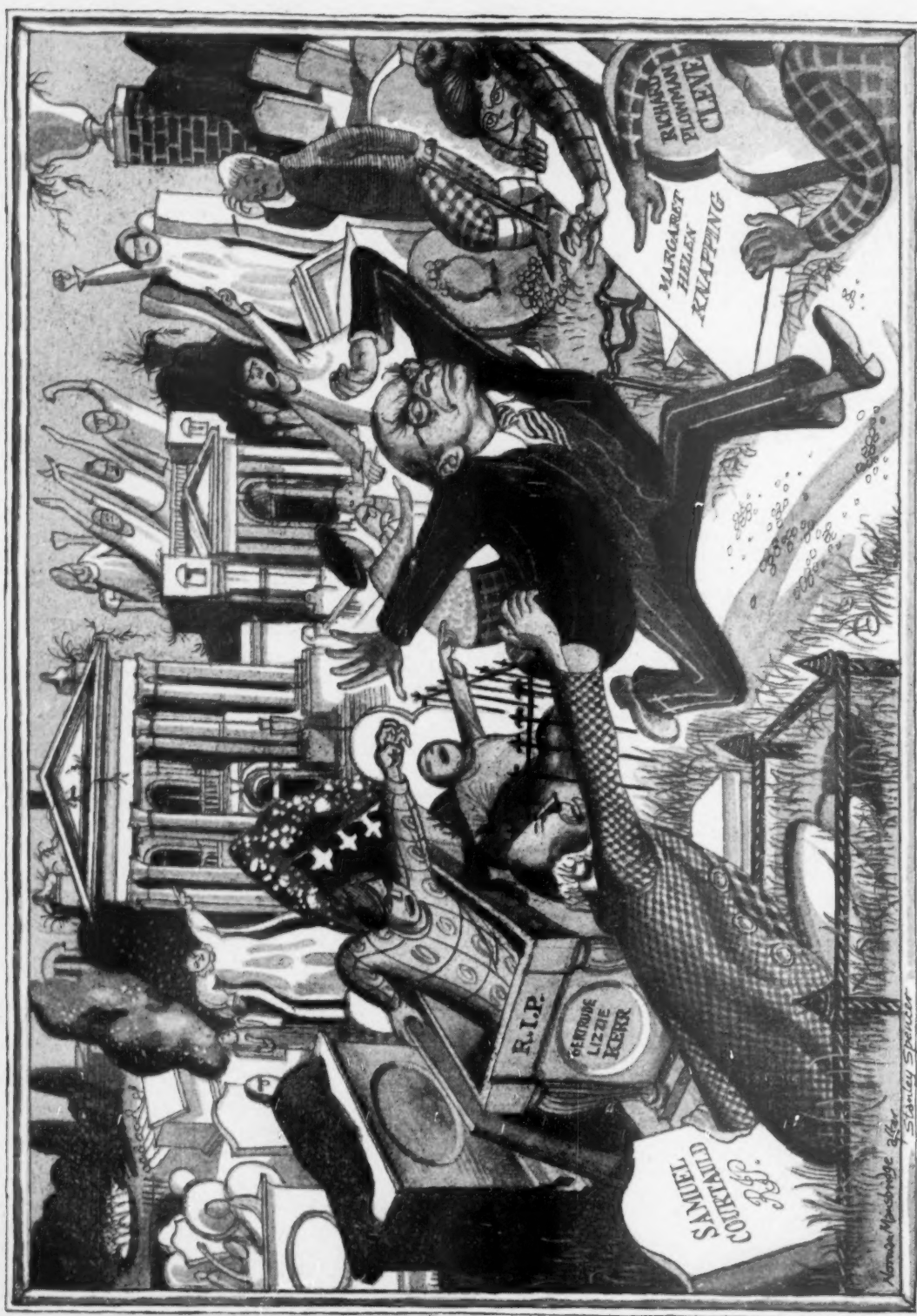
winding up for the Government, closed any remaining loopholes by defending the use of clichés, "the accumulated wisdom of centuries." New College must have been more easy-going over these matters in his day than in Mr. GAITSKELL's.

### Friday, February 5

The debate on Mr. KENNETH THOMPSON's motion calling attention to overcrowding in prisons brought forth a wise contribution from Mr. GEORGE BENSON, who is Chairman of the Howard League for Penal Reform, though he exploded a small bomb with his praise of Dartmoor. The unanimous note of urgency sounded by Members was hardly matched by Sir HUGH LUCAS-TOOTH, who expressed the Home Office view in terms rather of regretful reassurance. Having thus put the matter back into its pigeonhole, the House turned to the subject of employment of "older," meaning old, men and women.

B. A. YOUNG





**THE MILBANK RESURRECTION**

*Original on offer to the Tate Gallery*



## BOOKING OFFICE

### Facts for the Fancy

ROPE-MAKER (The Beautiful), soubriquet of Louise Labé (1526-1566), a poetess who wrote in three languages, and who was distinguished for her courage at the siege of Perpignan. — Dr. Brewer's *Reader's Handbook*.

**W**HAT a lot of information has dropped into limbo this century. The older reference books are full of anecdotes that to-day nobody knows, old plays that nobody reads, plots of forgotten epics, minor characters in forgotten romances, weather saws and the latinate witticisms of the clergy. The type of knowledge is out of fashion, hence the incomprehension with which some of the younger critics treat a writer like Dickens, who was symbiotic with his public, had read more out-of-date books than contemporary ones, and lived the same kind of sensational day-dream as his fellow indulgers in melodrama. Most classics are related not only to previous classics but also to the active literature of their writers' own time, especially their own boyhood, and that, as Orwell was always pointing out, included vivid tripe. To approach Victorian literature without any understanding of the "Sunny Hours of an Old Bookman" type of indiscriminate book-guzzling falsifies one's picture of it.

My edition of *Brewer* is 1911, but its atmosphere can have changed little since its industrious compiler began to answer questions that no normal man would ever ask. I see him as a man who really wanted to write letters to the newspapers but, finding that he never got the right lead, decided to produce a one-man correspondence column in book form. Then it did not matter that year after year nobody inquired who Abel Shuffelbottom was; he could still reveal that it was "the name assumed by Robert Southey in some amatory poems published in 1799."

He has several pages on the Errors of Authors—Campbell called the people of Wyoming "gentle," but the mutual hatred between the farmers rendered the place a hell:

Shakespeare made the Ghost in *Hamlet* a Roman Catholic: Victor Hugo calls Barkyll Fedro a common British patronymic. Is one supposed to crow over these unfortunates, or learn from their example, or simply add their mistakes to one's store of instructive conversation?

Whatever the intention of the editor, the real value of his, and similar, books is to provide compost, for the soil in which literature grows (and it is a growth of readers as well as of writers) must include a proportion of the odd, the unpredictable,



the reverberant, like Dr. Brewer's fourteen columns of superstitions—"A guinea-pig has no ears"; his affirmations—VENTRILOQUIST: The best that ever lived was Brabant, the engastrimisth of François I of France; and his wild erudition—"PODGERS (The), lickspittles of the great. *Hollingshead: The Birthplace of Podgers*." And what could be more stimulating to the imagination than "RICE. *Eating rice with a bodkin*. Aminé, the beautiful wife of Sidi Nouman, ate rice with a bodkin, but she was a ghoul."

An equally well-stored mind was Sir Gurney Benham's. From Bishop Berkeley's Poems to Inscriptions on Sun-dials and Chimney-pieces, from the second act of Arthur Murphy's *The Upholsterer* to Japanese Proverbs, he extracted quotations from the best that has been thought, or at least said. Like most compilers of "Dictionaries of Quotations," he gives the impression of being more

interested in providing material for quoting than in identifying quotations, and as a storehouse he is incomparable. You wish to round off a letter to a pen-friend in the Near East fixed up for you by Unesco? Here is the very thing:

"The most magnificent and costly dome  
Is but an Upper chamber to a tomb."

If your pen-friend assumes you know Young's *The Last Day* at first hand, so much the better for international relations. You cannot find the closing words of your Prize-giving Address? Try

"Need was, need is, and need will  
ever be

For him and such as he"  
and do not forget to mention that it comes from John Vance Cheney's *The Man With the Hoe. A Reply*.

My edition of Benham is undated, but it includes a Lloyd George speech of 1935. Like the *Oxford Book*, it is rather thin on the twentieth century, from which so many of the quotations one wants to verify come. There is only one Churchill—"terminological inexactitude"—no Eliot, not even "not with a bang but a whimper," no Auden; but the temptation to browse overwhelms criticism. What phrase is variously assigned to Whistler and the 8th Duke of Devonshire? "I'm not arguing with you, I'm telling you."

The lost, beckoning Brewer-Benham world, the world of omnivorous, indiscriminate reading, the world of Shelley and Browning and Swinburne, the world of mouldering calf-bound farces that made Lord North's Cabinet roar, and universal histories that listed wonders and sleepers and champions in sevens, is a world whose ore has not yet had all its radio-activity released.

R. G. G. PRICE

### From the Mud Ages

**Animals, Men and Myths.** "Morus" (Richard Lewinsohn). Gollancz, 21/-

This "history of the influence of animals on civilization and culture" traces their evolution from the Mud Ages to the present day, examining in detail the changing attitude of man towards them—necessarily violent at

first, then increasingly philosophic, and now either scientific or sentimental. It is amusingly written by a scientist with a sense of irony, who takes a cool view of human motives.

Man, he says, is by far the most numerous of the large animals; he is not yet domesticated, being one of the very few mammals who will kill his own kind without the provocation of extreme hunger; and the future of animals, which depends on his will and needs, is not brightened by his steady swing to vegetarianism, or his invention of mechanical transport and synthetic substitutes. This book has not caught up with the Piltown exposure, and is careless enough to put Coke's experimental farm in Leicestershire, but it has gathered intelligently a great deal of interesting information.

E. O. D. K.

**The Last Barricade.** Mervyn Jones. Cape, 12/6

A President in exile in England continues to direct the underground movement in his native state, superbly indifferent to the desire of his sons to become ordinary middle-class Englishmen. One son gets away, marries the vulgar daughter of a Labour ex-Minister and establishes himself as a Rotarian estate agent. The other, a dental student, is dominated by his father and acts as his secretary. He falls in love and hopes to escape, but his fiancée becomes a devoted disciple of his father. The fallen statesman becomes ill just as the situation in his homeland turns to his advantage, but an appalling private nurse, yet another character who regards his mission as secondary to the claims of humdrum

living, cuts the dying man off from all news.

The story trots along at a lively pace. The brisk, plain style and the rapid flow of freshly invented episodes retain the interest; but the characters are so caricatured that what seems to be intended as the central theme of the book, does not.

R. G. G. P.

**African Assignment.** Sir Francis de Guinand. Hodder and Stoughton, 21/-

Only in his last few pages does this great Chief of Staff revert to the dignities of his familiar position when, in working out a policy of sweet reasonableness for all parties and races in South Africa, he applies the technique of an army leader preparing a big action so aptly that one feels only reason and sweetness are needed to make his proposals work.

His earlier chapters are all of the "How well I remember!" order, recovered from nostalgic days when it was jolly good fun to run an Empire that had jungles to explore and elephants to shoot. His liveliest exploit was the traversing of a tract of half-known country on the fringes of Rhodesia, his most distressing adventure the throwing away of his precious mineral samples by a native "boy" who wanted to wear the sack containing them. His maps cover a thousand miles of wild Africa and a golf-course laid out for four club members near the shores of Lake Nyasa.

C. C. P.

**Lavallette Bruce: HIS ADVENTURES AND INTRIGUES BEFORE AND AFTER WATERLOO.** Ian Bruce. Hamilton, 21/-

Having devoted a book to his grandfather's sentimental journey to the East with Lady Hester Stanhope,

Brigadier Bruce now relates the rest of his adventures. Told largely in extracts from letters, it makes an interesting story, for Michael Bruce had a knack of being in the centre of events. As a very young and very censorious civilian, he was present at the bombardment of Copenhagen and accompanied Moore's army to Corunna. He was in Paris before, during and after the Hundred Days, and the high spot in his career came when he assisted Count Lavallette, Napoleon's old Postmaster-General, to escape from Bourbon justice. For this, having already made himself obnoxious by championing Marshal Ney, he was tried and imprisoned.

Cocksure and self-righteous as he was, he lacked neither courage nor generosity. He also had a way with women, became involved in an eventually embarrassing relationship with Ney's widow, and found favour in the roving eyes of Lady Caroline Lamb.

F. B.

**John Keats: The Living Year.**

Robert Gittings. Heinemann, 16/-

In writing another book on such a subject it must always be a temptation to exaggerate the importance of any new discovery or theory. Of this failing Mr. Gittings is not entirely guiltless. His book is a scholarly account of the *annus mirabilis* in Keats' life—the amazing twelve months beginning in September 1818, when the poet was only twenty-two years old, and during which he wrote most of his greatest work. Mr. Gittings has been at infinite pains to trace the sources of Keats' inspiration in his reading, his letters and the places that he visited. The result is fascinating, though once or twice he seems to overstrain in his efforts to establish a connection between them.

His most interesting discovery is the identification of the mysterious "Hastings lady" with "the beautiful Mrs. Jones" who suggested to Keats the subject of St. Agnes' Eve. But I feel that more proof is needed before one can accept his theory of "six months' passionate and intellectual attachment between them." On the slender evidence that we have it seems that Mrs. Jones was interested in poetry—or perhaps in poets—though it is hard to believe that her heart can have been deeply affected by Keats' tragedy, if she could write the malicious parody of Severn's letters home from his friend's death-bed in Italy, which Mr. Gittings publishes in his Appendix. It was hardly a moment for such laboured humour.

S. B.

**Flaming Janet** Pamela Hill. Chatto & Windus, 12/6

Janet Kennedy was one of James IV's mistresses and was thought to be both a witch and the poisoner of the





mistress he loved, Margaret Drummond. She also managed to entice, tease, betray and later recapture the savage and eminent Earl of Angus. Rapacious, high-spirited and slightly fey around the edges, she was just such a wanton as would be needed by any lady novelist anxious to illuminate one of the more confused periods of Scottish politics.

Yet, despite all the usual trappings, Miss Hill's natural instinct for tale-spinning and the intensity of her interest in her heroine make the novel something better than its ingredients. I enjoyed the book while I was reading it, and it seems to gain force in retrospect. I liked the delicate insistence that in the late fifteenth century Scotland was more civilized than England. Do not be put off by the title, the jacket or the blurb. It is not just another historical novelette; it has life.

R. G. G. P.

**La Fontaine: The Man and his Work.**  
Monica Sutherland. *Cape*, 12/6

Mrs. Sutherland's study is the first biography to be written in English about La Fontaine. Facts are generously supplied, set forth in admirably coherent details, amplified in footnotes at the end of each chapter. Mrs. Sutherland's zeal is impressive, yet where, in all this, is La Fontaine? The visual impact of the *Fables*, so often enhanced by colourful and slightly bizarre drawings, has a powerful influence in the formative years. La Fontaine himself is remembered as an Olympian oracle of first moral principles. Mrs. Sutherland strips the moralist created by our childhood conscience, and introduces him professionally as a *Maitre des Eaux et Forêts*, and presents him as an irresponsible lackey, a prettily mannered careerist, at best a dilatory bore.

Our La Fontaine should surely be either hero or villain. Could Mrs. Sutherland's Will-o'-the-wisp, flitting from hostess to hostess, have understood the lion's roar? There are no arguments against Mrs. Sutherland's data, but are facts without imagination enough in the case of a man whose work has inspired so many children with a first shining vision of justice?

K. D.

**In Sara's Tents.** Walter Starkie.  
*Murray*, 25/-

Erudition and exuberance seldom go hand-in-hand as often as they should, but Dr. Starkie has allowed them to meet in his serious study of gypsies in many countries, and is gloriously funny about some English Soroptomist ladies who "responded like Maenads to the cymbals of the Corybantic revels" in Hungary. He, too, responds to the gipsy quality in rather voluptuous prose at times.

The book is, necessarily, bitty and crowded: he seems to be wanting to tell us everything. The best part is about his experiences in Provence where the Archbishop of Aix said Mass for a great assembly of gypsies, met to honour St. Sara, who was, by tradition, an Egyptian—a hand-maiden to St. James and St. John, and fellow traveller with them and the rest of the Family of Bethany in a ship without oars or sails or rudder that arrived (after the persecutions following the Crucifixion) near the mouth of the Rhône. The excellent photographs and the lovely drawings by José Porta add value to a rich book.

B. E. B.

**Pietro's Pilgrimage.** Wilfrid Blunt.  
*James Barrie*, 21/-

Mr. Blunt's Pietro is Pietro della Valle, who travelled from his native Italy through all the most interesting parts of the Turkish, Persian and Moghul Empires to South India between 1614 and 1626. It was a remarkable journey, and Pietro seems, from the richness of Mr. Blunt's narrative, to have written a no less

was never bored. In Bagdad one of his two faithful Italian servants murdered the other, but Pietro promptly acquired instead a Nestorian Christian wife, who, with her family, accompanied him for the next five years. Her tragic death at Minab left Pietro with her little ward Mariuccia as his principal travelling companion from that time forward. A French historian has said that Pietro *s'amusait avec Mariuccia* on the way, but this scandalous suggestion, together with certain doubts as to Pietro's potency, Mr. Blunt robustly denies.

M. C.

## AT THE PLAY

*The Private Secretary*  
(ARTS)

SOME bright boy on the look-out for a thesis would not be entirely wasting his time if he gave us a detailed history of the comic stage parson, a character which appears to be a kind of litmus-paper to national taste—not to excellence or poverty but to trend. To-day, although our broadest pleasures, as reflected in our



(The Private Secretary  
Douglas Cattermole—MR. TOM COLMER Rev. Robert Spalding—MR. HAROLD GOODWIN  
Mr. Cattermole—MR. RICHARD WORDSWORTH

remarkable journal. Pietro began travelling to ease a broken heart, but curiosity kept him going for the next twelve years.

His courage never faltered, and he

most popular press, films and radio, can seldom have been lower, the clergy (and I think rightly) are excused as butts; yet in 1884, when public manners were far more rigid, *The*

*Private Secretary* began its then phenomenal run of seven hundred and eighty-five performances, a success based very largely on the absolute humiliation of a defenceless curate.

Played first by Tree and later by William Penley, the Rev. Robert Spalding was clasped to the great bombazine bosom of the Victorians as few stage greenhorns have ever been. London worshipped him, because he was flung into chests, thrust under tables, used as a punchball by athletic young men, mocked as a teetotaller, starved of his staple diet of bath buns, and regularly terrified out of his wits—and yet came up for more, smiling idiotically and murmuring about his chattels and his periodicals. The fascinating thing for our bright boy is that all this happened at a time when the Church as an institution still claimed the gravest respect from the ordinary man and woman. What did Lambeth say, and what our great-grandmothers, though many of them must have gone to swell the laughter at the Princes?

In spite of altered taste some of the laughter remains, in fact rather more than I expected. The plot may not be quite so good as that of *Charley's Aunt*, but this period production by HUGH MILLER proves it to be made of pretty durable stuff. Nobody behaves with malice towards Spalding, which would have been uncomfortable; when he arrives at Mr. Marsland's house he is immediately swept up into such a whirl of adverse circumstances as are utterly beyond human control, and his belief that he has landed in a private lunatic asylum is not so very far from the truth. However much we enjoy his ordeal we are always firmly on his side.

The whole production is a little rough, and some of its slapstick too self-conscious, but it has zest. Spalding should have shown more dignity, and been more orotund in pronouncement. He is whipped before he starts, but even so the pale and hopeless resilience which HAROLD GOODWIN gives him is very useful. Uncle Cattermole, who rolls a terrible eye and bends pokers to sublimate the worst furies of his curried liver, comes splendidly through RICHARD WORDSWORTH, except in the matter of his waist, claimed to be ninety-nine inches and obviously not half that size. At the Arts there must be a few spare cushions (and also a more Victorian gin bottle than the clip-topped specimen which disfigures the first act). VIOLA LYEL waffles beautifully as the spook-drunk governess, LLOYD PEARSON makes much of Mr. Marsland's anxiety to screen his riotous youth from his daughters, and TOM COLMER leads a lively young brigade.

The asides in this play are a joy to the student, and so are the puns, falling like sodden pancakes. "What

motive brought you here?" "A locomotive." "A drop of soup—a mere soupçon?" But who are we to be superior?

#### Recommended

London is short of laughs, but don't forget *Pygmalion* (St. James's), *The Boy Friend* (Wyndham's) a delicious parody of musical comedy in the 20's, and *The Seven Year Itch* (Aldwych) soon to end a deservedly long run.

ERIC KEOWN

## AT THE PICTURES

*The Love Lottery*  
*The Glenn Miller Story*

THE new Ealing film has a number of the familiar Ealing characteristics but lacks the most important ones—strength, coherence and balance in the script. The main theme, the real story of *The Love Lottery* (Director: CHARLES CRICHTON) does not get under way until a good forty-five minutes have gone by; and almost throughout, one has something like that impression so often given by British films more than twenty years ago, that anything, any kind of effect was being stuffed in whenever opportunity offered for the sake of a laugh, any kind of laugh. Not only for laughs, either: there are several dream sequences here, pleasantly done and full of visual charm, but mostly quite irrelevant or at least purely decorative.

The story is of a film star (DAVID NIVEN) much pestered by fans, who sarcastically suggests that he might be the prize in a lottery. He lives in Italy (to avoid the fans), and a mysterious organization there called the International Syndicate of Computation, which is concerned with the estimating of odds all over the world (though I was never very clear exactly how it made enormous profits out of this), employs a beautiful girl mathematician

(ANNE VERNON) to trick him into agreeing to the lottery in fact.

They fall in love, of course, and wish to marry without waiting for the result of the lottery; and the girl (PEGGY CUMMINS) who actually wins it has a pleasant, ordinary (and indignant) young man in tow. The emotional complications, in fact, might be the stuff of any light comedy. The trouble is that they are not fully integrated with the particular idea, and that as I say they hardly begin—indeed, one of the characters isn't introduced—until halfway through the film.

From moment to moment, nevertheless, there is much to enjoy. The eye can find a great deal of delight, and by no means only in those dream sequences; near the beginning there is a chase through sunlit Italian village streets which is admirably done. The typical Ealing trick of the national-character reference (quick, parenthetical cutting to the same situation in different countries—perhaps merely to posters in different languages) has by now come to seem rather mechanical but still gets its laugh; and all the playing is good in its light, unconcerned key. As a whole—incoherent but amusing.

About *The Glenn Miller Story* (Director: ANTHONY MANN) there isn't very much to say except that it is in many ways a conventional musical biography: an excuse for stringing together a number of musical items, the story showing marked signs of the screenwriters' difficulty in making drama out of an undramatic life, and the whole irradiated by the deadly safety-first benevolence that vitiates all narrative involving real people who are still alive.

The characterization—apart from Glenn Miller himself, who is simply presented as a young man with a



Rez Allerton—DAVID NIVEN

[The Love Lottery]

particular ambition and the personality of JAMES STEWART—is done in shorthand: the girl he married is just a nice girl (with the personality of JUNE ALLYSON) who has the habit of saying “Honestly!” and his great friend is just HENRY MORGAN with a comic taste for buying second-hand cars. The point of the piece is the music, and for anyone with any taste for that kind of music it’s very pleasing. I don’t remember Glenn Miller’s style well enough to know whether they’ve reproduced it successfully, but as far as it was possible to do so without him no doubt they have.

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London there are *Front Page Story* (3/2/54), an over-contrived plot made very entertaining with good newspaper-office detail; *The Moon is Blue* (20/1/54), a highly enjoyable light comedy whose “X” certificate means only that it is a trifle more outspoken than films usually venture to be; *M. Hulot’s Holiday* (25/11/53), very funny indeed; the bright CinemaScope comedy *How to Marry a Millionaire* (27/1/54); and a classic, *The Battleship Potemkin*.

Best release is *The Million Pound Note* (13/1/54), a cheerful fable of fifty years ago. RICHARD MALLETT

### AT THE OPERA



*Gloriana*  
(COVENT GARDEN)

MR. BRITTEN’s opera, which had so glum and glacial a hearing when it first came out, is up on remand, as it were. So that the show shall be handier for touring, the whole of the Norwich masque is cut from Act Two. The unaccompanied choruses in this scene were not up to much: their mild prettiness sounded like a quote from Sterndale Bennett’s *May Queen*. But alongside the singing went the elegant caperings and fetching costumes of Time, Concord and their rustic attendants. These were an essential part of the general spectacle. With a good third of its pageantry gone, *Gloriana* seems punier than ever—and no less obscure—as to both plot and motivation.

MR. BRITTEN tries to turn the Earl of Essex into a spiky, positive character by giving him minor-ninths to sing in the Thames-side conspiracy scene. All to no purpose. Even in Mr. PEARS’ mouth, the ninths sounded like octaves out of tune: and Essex remained to the end what Lytton Strachey judged him to be, a young man not very strong in the head.

MISS CROSS, as Elizabeth, almost convinced us, it is true, that he was worth doting on. After dismissing Essex from her presence and favour in the dressing-table scene, she stood in

the empty chamber, wigless, huddled and old, as though turned to stone; a sort of stone that can feel bottomless agony. But the credit here was neither to Mr. BRITTEN nor to his text-writer, Mr. PLOMER. It was very much Miss CROSS’s own doing, an illusion conjured up by her personal art and authority. A minute or two later, poise and wig recovered, she was ruthlessly ordering Essex’s arrest to superb barks on the full brass. (An admirable page this. Verdi himself never wrote anything more intensely *operatic*.) One did not feel at all sorry for Essex. Nobody weeps for a figment even in the opera-house, where tears come all too readily.

If one writes testily about this and other librettos of Mr. BRITTEN’s choice, that is because his musical gifts require something better. The *Gloriana* music has bits of dead timber, admittedly. When Eduard Devrient complained

that Mendelssohn wasn’t inventing new or striking themes any more, Mendelssohn replied in effect that he was content to work up the first idea that came into his head. I am reminded of this anecdote when listening to Essex’s “Then Let Me Dare Assert” (Act One, Scene Two). Here, surely, is a tune that didn’t need much grubbing or praying for. But elsewhere what tenderness, power and (bearing in mind certain Tudor echoes) what subtle scholarship!

After the gala performance seven months ago there were some who reviled the score as if it were stark innovation, the *Sacre* or *Wozzeck* of our day. The compliment was undeserved. The *Gloriana* idiom opens doors on no new world. That in itself is no bad thing. Music has been pathfinding for too long. The time has come for music to sit down and dig in.

CHARLES REID





## ON THE AIR

Shades of Mack Sennett

IT is seldom profitable to welcome the first of a new series of comedy programmes with a full chorus of praise: all too often the script-writers and performers seem to exhaust the whole of their material and talent in their initial offering and then lapse into heavy-handed, ham-fisted routine. Eric Barker and Terry-Thomas have more than once disappointed us in this way, and they are two of the most enterprising and energetic of television's strictly limited team of comedians.

For the moment then I must soft-pedal my enthusiasm for "Friends and Neighbours," a new show written by Sid Colin and Talbot Rothwell and starring Janet Brown, Avril Angers, Peter Butterworth and Benny Lee: the Birds and the Honeybees—the two families played by this bright and personable quartet—may not retain their ebullience and controlled irresponsibility in future programmes. But "Friends and Neighbours" is certainly the best attempt made so far to adapt the favourite "family" formula of sound radio to the television screen. The script of this first episode made little use of verbal fun and concentrated on the humour of incident, mime and buffoonery.

There were no memorable "cracks," none of the trade-mark clichés which have become the inevitable stock-in-trade of all B.B.C. comedies: instead, we were ladled generous helpings of slapstick and eye-wash and the mixture was surprisingly appetizing. It reminded me of an early Mack Sennett comedy: it moved at speed, it was as



[Friends and Neighbours

The Honey Bees (Miss Janet Brown and Mr. Peter Butterworth)—The Birds (Mr. Benny Lee and Miss Avril Angers) and "Mr. Gillie."

obviously ludicrous as the clowning of Ben Turpin and Chester Conklin, and it relied throughout for its laughs on expert timing.

The Canasta sketch with Butterworth insisting that the game should be attempted in spite of the foursome's complete ignorance of the rules and Avril Angers petulantly demanding "Why can't we play Rummy?" was put over very cleverly; and so too was the scene in which the polite detergent salesman was induced to surrender the entire contents of his sample-case. Avril Angers, who has more than once stolen the limelight in Terry-Thomas shows, played a sulky, dead-pan Mrs. Honeybee with calculated and highly effective obtuseness, and Benny Lee as Mr. Honeybee was the life and soul of the party. We all know Mr. Bird, the stuffy, fussy, domineering little business man (Suburbia and the works of Stephen Leacock and James Thurber are full of him) who was played with great zest by Peter Butterworth, and we all know Mrs. Bird (Janet Brown),

his giggling, goggling, helpless missus. Good types, all four of them.

My only real grouse concerns the film sequences with which the programme was introduced. They were entirely superfluous and much too slow. Television producers seem much too eager these days to weld lengths of film into their studio programmes: give them half a chance and they are out and about with the cameras, shooting wildly in all directions. Street scenes fascinate them. A man walks the length of an unnaturally deserted street (was the film made at dawn?), stops before the door of a house and fumbles for his keys. And hey presto! Here

he is in the studio, in roughly the same clothes! The device is so obvious that it should, I feel sure, be used very sparingly: no-one is fooled for a moment and nothing is gained, for any "atmosphere" created by such laborious means makes the viewer deeply suspicious of what is to follow.

The Fifty-One Society's Home Service discussion on "Television—Commercial Competition?" may have added little to the great debate but it proved wonderfully entertaining. The chief speakers, Lady Violet Bonham Carter and Malcolm Muggeridge, were refreshingly eloquent and purposeful: we heard few platitudes, much pyrotechnic wit and a fair summary of the arguments put forward at great length in the Press. There were rather too many red herrings for my taste, and far too much was made of evidence that is either hearsay or conjecture, but the programme was immensely stimulating and must have done the poor old buffeted B.B.C. a power of good.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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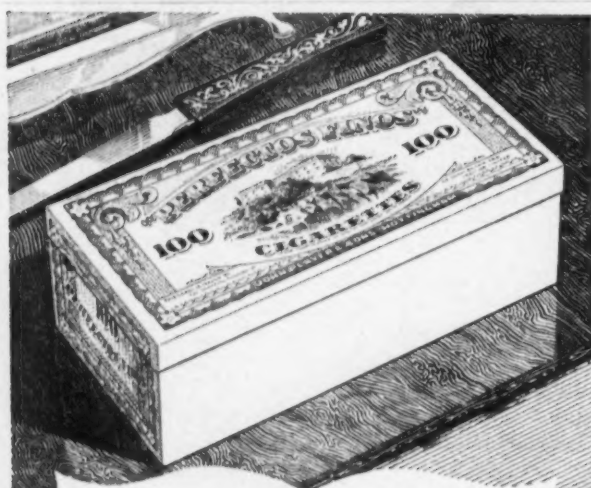


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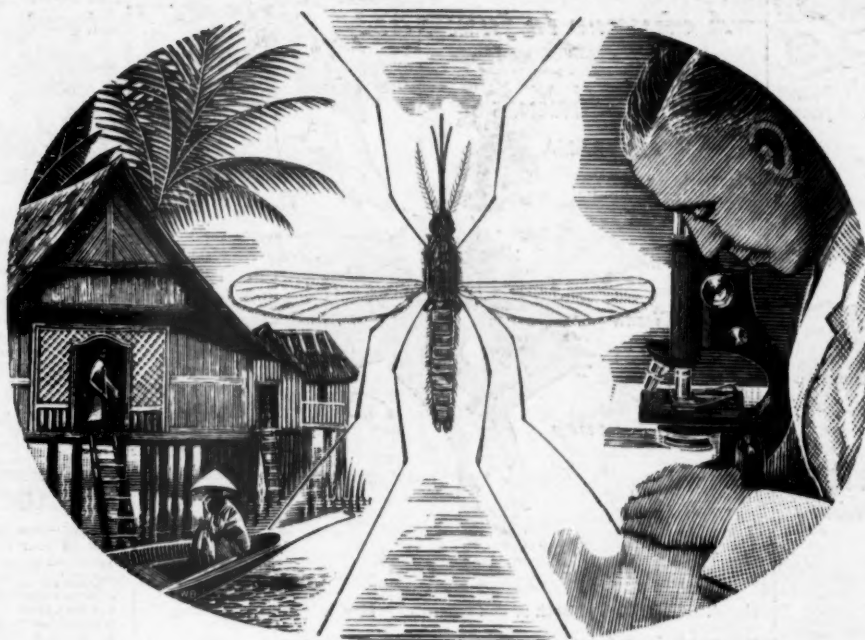
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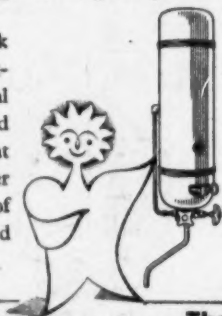




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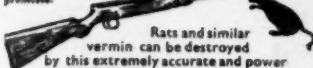
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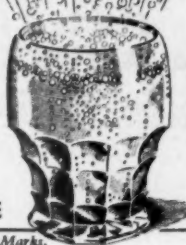
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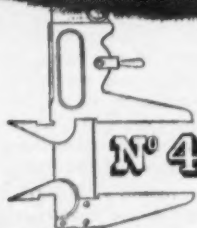
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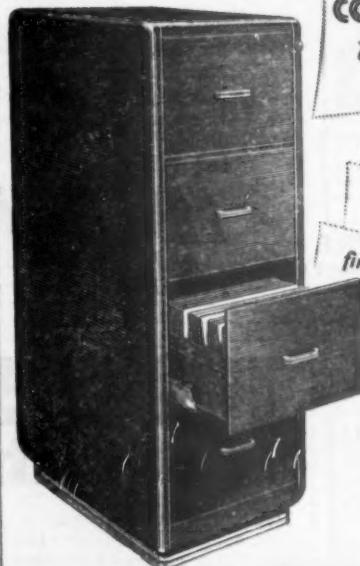
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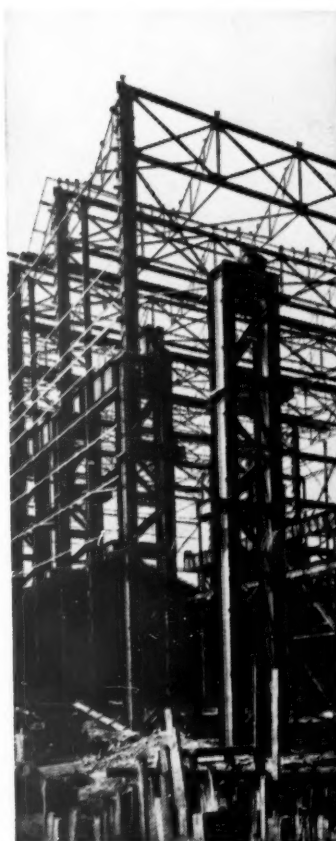
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